

¶ To the Kynges

hyghnesse, my moost gratious soue-raigne lorde Henry the eyght, by the grace of God kynge of Englande Fraunce and Irelande, defendour of the Fayth and in erth supreme heed of the church of Englande and Irelande.



Amonges all other excellencies moste gratious soueraigne lorde, wher with almyghty God hathe endowed mankynde, aboue the residue of erthly creatures, as an outward declaration of reason or reasonablenesse wherin consysteth the equalitie of man vnto Angels and the difference betwene the same and brute beestes, I verily suppose that speche or language is not to be reputed amonges the smallest of inventions. For speche is reputed the conveyer of one to another in open and playne sentence, which in the residue of lyuely creatures lacketh and is not therfor amonges them. But by certayn couert and derke sygnes and that in fewe thynges hauynge course and operation onely of nature. Thys speche or language after the confusyon of tonges, sente by goddes punyshment for pryde and arrogancye of people, hath bene be a certayne mutynate and dyspositon naturall dyuyded and inuented in sondry partes of the worlde as felowshyppes or compaynyenges of folkes one with another chaunced, moche to the outwarde expressynge of the thynge in worde or sounde, accordynge to that whereof it had meanynge or sygnyficacyon. But in processe of tyme by delygence or policy of people, after dyuers fourmes sygures, and impressyons in metal barkes of trees, & other mater vsed for memorie and knowlege of thinges then present or passed, sondry letters or caractes were first amonges the Phenices deuysed and founde, with suche kynrynges and tornynges of one to another by a marueylous subtilte and crafte, as counterueyled was and is equiualent to the same langages. So as the conceyte of mannes mynde, whyche at the begynnynge was vsed to be declared by mouthe onely, came to suche porte, that it was as sensybly and byuely expressed in wrytynge. Herupon ensewed a great occasyon and corage vnto them that shulde wryte, to compose and adorne the rudenesse and barbarisme of speche, and to forme it to an eloquent and ordynate perfection, where vnto many and many greate poetes and oratours haue hyghly employed their trauayles and corages, leauynge therby notable renoume of them selues and ensample perpetuel to their posterite. Amonges other the Greekes in all kyndes of sciences, semed so to preuayle and so to ornate their tonge, as yet by other of eyght noble langages can not be perfectely imitated or followed. The Latyns by exemple of the Greekes, haue gotten or wonne to them no small glorie, in the fourmynge, order and beautynge of that tonge. Out of the whyche two, if it be well serched, that is to saye Greke and Latyn, though by corruption of speche it shulde seme made otherwise, haue bene deryued y residue of the languages that be written with the letters or sygures of eyther of them both. But of all people vnto whyche moste apperteyneth to be the Italian and Spanysshe tonges, vnto whome the one by corruption of the Latyn and Longobardes habbe yet begynnynge as latyn spoken by straungers of al vnderstondyng. The other beynge also was by Gothes Vandales Scythes Britons Scottes, and other so many tymes blemished, as marueyle it is to se nowe vnto what perfection these two formed out of the latyn barbare speches be reduced. Next vnto them in similitude to the latyn is the French tonge whyche by diligence of people of the same is in fewe yeares passed so amended, as well in pronunciation as in wrytynge, that an Englysshe man by a small tyme exercysed in that tonge hath not lacked grounde to make a grammer or rule ordynarye therof.

Though of trouth whyche some shall scarsely beleue, the Germayns haue so fourmed the order of their langage, that in the same, is both as moche plente as nere concordaunce to the phrase of the latyn, as the Frenche

tonge hath. And verely, lyke as all these and the rest haue ben thus vigilant and studious to meliorate or amende theyr langages: so hath there not lacked amonges vs Englysshe men, whych haue evermore endeuoured and employed themselues to the beautifyenge and betteryng of thenglysshe tonge.

Amonges whome moost excellent prince, my most redoubted and gracious souerayne lorde, I your moost humble vassall, subiecte and seruaunt Wyllyam Thynne, chefe clerke of your kechyn, moued by a certayne inclinacion and zele, whych I haue to heare of anye thynge soundynge to the laude and honoure of thys your noble realme, haue taken great delectation, as the tymes and layseres myght suffre, to rede & heare the bokes of that noble & famous clerke Geffray Chaucer, in whose workes is so manyfest comprobacion of hys excellent lernynge in all kyndes of doctrines and sciences, suche frutefulnesse in wordes, well accordynge to the matter and purpose, so swete and pleasaunt sentences, such perfeccion in metre, the composition so adapted, such freshnesse of inuention, compendiousnesse in narration, suche sensyble and open style, lackynge neyther matieryne mediocrite conuenable in dyspolition, & suche sharpnesse or quycknesse in conclusyon, that it is moch to be marueyled, howe in hys tyme, when doutlesse al good letters were layde a slepe throughoute the worlde, as the thynge whyche eyther by the dyspolition and influence of the bodyes aboue, or by other ordinaunce of God, seined lyke and was in daunger to haue vtterly perysshed, suche an excellent poete in our tonge should as it were, nature repugnyng, aryse. For thoughe it had ben in Demosthenes or Homerus tymes, whe al learnyng and excellency of sciences florysshed amonges the Grekes, or in þ season that Cicero prince of eloquence amonges latyns lyued, yet had it ben a thynge ryght rare and straunge and worthye perpetuall laude, that any clerke by lernynge or wytte couldе then haue framed a tonge before so rude and unperfyte, to such a swete ornature and composicion, lykely yf he had lyued in these dayes, beynge good letters so restored and reuyued as they be, yf he were not empeched by the enuye of suche as maye tollerate nothynge, whyche to vnderstande theyr capacite doth not extende, to haue brought it vnto a full and fynall perfection.

Wherfore gracious souerayne lorde, takyng suche delyte and pleasure in the workes of thys noble clerke (as is afore mencioned) I haue of a longe season moche vsed to rede & vysite the same: & as bokes of dyuers impryntes came vnto my handes, I easely and without great studye, myght and haue depreheended in them many errours, falsyties, and deprauations, whych euidently appered by the contrarietees and altercations founde by collacion of the one wyth the other, wherby I was moued and stired to make diligent serch, where I myght fynde or recouer any trewe copies or exemplaries of the sayd bokes, whereunto in processe of tyme, not wythout coste & payne I attayned, and not onely vnto suche as seme to be very trewe copyes of those workes of Geffray Chaucer, whyche before had bene put in prynt, but also to dyuers other newer tyll nowe vnprynted, but remaynynge almoste vnknowen and in oblyuion, wherupon lamentynge wyth my selfe the negligence of people that haue bene in thys realme, who doutlesse were verye remysse in the settynge forthe or auaunsement eyther of the hystoires therof to the great hyndraunce of þ renowme of suche noble princes and valyaunt conquerours and capitayns as haue ben in the same or also of the workes or memoyre of the famous and excellente clerkes in all kyndes of sciences that haue florysshed therin. Of whyche bothesoures it hath pleased God as hyghly to nobilitate thys yle as any other region of christendome: I thought it in maner appertenaut vnto my dewtye, and that of verye honestye and loue to my countrey I ought no lesse to do, then to put my helpyng hande to the restauracion and bryngynge agayne to lyght of the sayd workes, after the trewe copyes and exemplaryes aforesayde. And deuysyng wyth my selfe, who of all other were moost worthye, to whome a thynge so excellent & notable shulde be dedicate, whych to my concepte semeth for the admiracion, noueltye, and straungenesse that it myghte be reputed to be of in the tyme of the authour, in comparison, as a pure and fyne tryed precyous or polyced ie well out of a rude or in-

digest

digeſt maſſe or matter, none coulde to my thinkynge occurre, that ſyns, or in the tyme of Chaucer, was or is ſuffycient, but only your maieſte royall, whyche by diſcrecyon and iugement as moost abſolute in wyſedome and all kyndes of doctryne, coulde and of hys innate clemence and goodneſſe, wolde adde or gyue any authoute her vnto.

For this cauſe moſt excellent and in all vertues moſt puiſſant prince, I as humbly proſtrate before your kyngdye eſtate, lowly ſupply and beſeche the ſame, that it woll vouchſafe to take in good parte my poore ſtudy and deſyrous mynde, in reducyng vnto light this ſo precious and neceſſary an ornament of the tonge of thys youre realme, ouer pytous to haue ben in anye poynt loſt, falſifyed, or neglected: So that vnder the ſhylde of youre moſt royall protectyon and defence it may go forthe in publyke, & preuayle ouer thoſe that wolde blemyſhe, deface, and in manye thynges clerely abolyſhe the laude, renoume, and glorie hertofore compared, and meritoriouſly acquired by dyuers princes, and other of thys ſayd moſt noble yle, whervnto not onelye ſtraungers vnder pretexte of hyghe learnyng and knowlege of theyr malytyous and peruers myndes, but alſo ſome of your owne ſubiectes blynded in loue and ignorance, do wyth great ſtudy contende. Moſt gracious, victorious and of god moſte elected and worthy prince my moſt dradde ſouerayne lord, in whom of very merite, dewtie, and ſucceſſyon, is renewed the glorious tytell of Defenſor of the chriſten faythe, whyche by your noble progenytour, the great Conſtantyne, ſometyme kyng of this realme and emperour of Rome was ſette god and hys apoſtels, thekely mayntayned, corroborate, and defended, almyghty Jeſu ſende to your hyghneſſe the contynuall and euerlaſtyng habundaūce of hys infynite grace. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the preface.

A Table of all the names of the workes contayned in thys volume.

¶ The Preface.

The Caunterbury tales I.
The Romant of the Roſe II.
Troylus and Creſeyde III.
The teſtamēt of creſeyde iiii.
The legende of good womē, wyth a balade v.
Boetius the Conſolatione philoſophie vi.
The dreame of Chaucer, wyth a balade vii.
The aſſemble of Foules viii.
The flour of Curteſy, with a balade ix.
How pryde is deed & herryed in a gentyl herte x.
La belle dame ſauns mercy xi.
Anneiyda and falſe Arcyte xii.
The aſſemble of Ladyes xiii.
The concluſyon of the Aſtrolabye xiiii.
The complaynt of the blacke knyght xv.
A preyſe of women xvi.
The houſe of Fame xvii.
The teſtament of Loue xviii.
The lamentacio of Mary Magdaleyn xix.
The remedy of Loue xx.
The complaynt of Mars and Venus xxi.
The complaynt of Mars alone xxii.
The complaynt of Venus alone xxiii.
The letter of Cupyde xxiiii.
A balade of our Lady xxv.
A balade to kynge Henry the fourth xxvi.
Of the Cuckowe & the Nightyngale xxvii.
Scogan vnto the ponge lordes and gentylmen of the kynges houſe xxviii.
A balade of good counſaile by Chaucer xxix.
Dyuers other goodly balades &c. xxx.

¶ Thus endeth the fyrſt table, and here followeth the ſeconde.

The Table.

In this table ye may fynde any thyng that ye woll haue in this volume by the folio, as foloweth.

¶ The Prologes of the Caunterbury tales.

The knyghtes tale. Fol. j.
The Squyers tale Fol. xij.
The Freres tale Fol. xvj.
The Cokes tale Fol. xix.
The mā of lawes tale Fol. xx.
The Shypmans tale Fol. xxvij

The Marchaunt̄es tale Fol. xxxj.
The wyfe of Bathes prologue Fol. xxxvj.
The wyfe of Bathes tale Fol. xl.
The Freres tale Fol. xlvj.
The Somnours tale Fol. xlvj.
The Clerke of Oxenfordes tale Fol. xlviij.
The Frankeleyns tale Fol. lv.
The seconde Nunnes tale Fol. lx.
The prologe of ꝑ Chanōs yoman Fol. lxij.
The tale of the Chanons yoman Fol. lxiij.
The Doctor of Phisykes tale Fol. lxviij.
The Pardoners Prologue Fol. lxx.
The Pardoners tale Fol. lxxj.
The Shypmans tale Fol. lxxvij.
The Priores Prologue Fol. lxxvj.
The priores tale Fol. eodem
The tyme of syr Topas Fol. lxxviij.
The tale of Chaucer Fol. lxxxv.
The Monkes Prologue Fol. lxxxvj.
The Monkes tale Fol. xc.
The tale of the Nunnes preest Fol. xcvij.
The Manciples tale Fol. xcviij.
The Persons Prologue Fol. C.
The Persons tale Fol. eodem.
The Plowmans tale Fol. C. vj.

¶ Explicit Caunterbury tales.

The Romaunt of the Rose Fol. C. xxviij.

¶ Troylus and Creseyde is deuyded into fyue bookes.

¶ The fyrst boke begynneth Fol. c. lxviij
The seconde boke begynneth Fol. c. lxxiij
The thyrde boke begynneth Fol. c. lxxxvj
The fourth boke begynneth Fol. cxvij
The fyfth boke begynneth Fol. cxxij

¶ Explicit Troylus and Creseyde.

¶ The Testament of Creseyde Fol. cc. vij
The complaynte of Creseyde Fol. cc. xv

¶ The legende of good women hath these folowyng. First.

¶ The Prologue. Fol. cc. xx.
¶ The legende of Cleopatras Fol. cc. j. xx.
The leg. of Thysbe of Babyloyne Fol. cc. xx
The legende of quene Dydo Fol. cc. xxj
The leg. of Hypsipyle & Medea Fol. cc. xxiij
The leg. of Lucrece of Rome Fol. cc. xxiiij
The legende of Ariadne Fol. cc. xxv
The legende of Philomene Fol. cc. xxvj
The legende of Phillys Fol. cc. xxvij
The legende of Hypermestra Fol. cc. xxviij

¶ Explicit the legende of Good women.

¶ Boetius de Consolatione is deuyded into fyue bokes.

¶ The fyrst boke begynneth Fol. cc. xxxij
The seconde boke begynneth Fol. cc. xxxvj
The thyrde boke begynneth Fol. cc. xlij
The fourth boke begynneth Fol. cc. xlvj
The fyfth boke begynneth Fol. cc. l.

¶ Explicat Boetius de consolatione.

¶ All these workes folowynge be workes by themselfe.

The dreme of Chaucer Fol. cc. lvij
The assemble of foules Fol. cc. lviij
The flour of Curtesy Fol. cc. lxvij
Howe Pyte is dede and buryed in a gentyll herte. Fol. cc. lxix
A balle dame sans mercy Fol. cc. lxx
Anelyda and false Arcyte Fol. cc. lxxvj
The assemble of Ladyes Fol. eodem.
The conclusion of chaucer Fol. cc. lxxj
The complaynt of the blacke knight Fol. ccc
A prayse of women Fol. ccc. iij

¶ The house of Fame is deuyded in to thre bookes.

¶ The fyrst boke begynneth Fol. ccc. v.
The seconde boke begynneth Fol. ccc. viij
The thyrde boke begynneth Fol. ccc. xj

¶ Explicit the house of Fame.

¶ The

¶ The Testament of Loue is deuyded in to thre bokes.

¶ The fyrst boke begynneth Fol.ccc.rb.
The seconde boke begynneth Fol.ccc.xxb.
The thyrde boke begynneth Fol.ccc.xli.

¶ All these workes folowynge be workes by them selfe.

The lamentacyon of Marye Magdalayne Fol.ccc.l.
The remedy of Loue Fol.ccc.lb.
The cõplaynt of Mars & venus fol.ccc.lbviij
The complaynt of Mars alone Fol.ccc.lix.
¶ The complaynt of Uenus alone Fol.ccc.lx.
The letter of Cupyde Fol.ccc.lx.
A balade of our lady Fol.ccc.lxiij.
A balade of kyng H. the fourth Fol.ccc.lxiiij.
Of þ cuckowe & þ nyghtingale Fol.ccc.lxvij.
Scogan vnto the yonge lordes and gentylmen of the kynges house Fol.ccc.lxix.
Dyuers other balades of Chaucer &c.

¶ Thus endeth the table of all the workes.

¶ Eyght goodly questions, with theyr aunsweres.

SYntyme in Grece that noble region
There were eight clerkes of grete science
Philosophers of notable discretion
Of whom was asked, to proue theyr prudence
Eyght questions, of derke intelygence
To whiche they answered after theyr entent
As here dothe appere playne and euydent

¶ The fyrst question, what erthly thyng
Is best, and to god moost commendable
The fyrst clerke answered wythout tarying
A mannes soule, euer fermne and stable
In trouthe, from trouthe nat varyable
But nowe alas full sore may we wepe
For couetyse hath brought trouthe a slepe

¶ The seconde, what thing is moost odious
A double man sayd the philosophie
wyth a virgyn face and a tayle venomous
wyth a fayre vieu, and a false profre
A corrupte caryen in a golden tree
It is a monster in natures lynage
One man to haue a double vysage

¶ The thyrde, what is the best dower
That maye be to a wyfe appropriate
A clene lyfe, was the clerkes aunswer
wythout synne, chast, and inuyolate
From all disceytes, and speches inornate
Or countenaunce, whyche shall be to dispyse
No fyre make, and no smoke wolle aryse

¶ The fourth question, what mayde may
Be called clene in chastyte
The fourth clerke answerd, whiche alway
Euery creature is a shamed on to lye
Of whom euery man reporteth gret honeste
Good maydens kepe your chastyte for the
And remembre that good name is gold worth

¶ Who is a poore man euer full of wo
A couetous man, whyche is a nygon
He that in his herte can neuer saye ho
The more good, the lesse distributyon
The richer, the worse of condityon
Men in this cost, clepen hym a nygarde
Sir Guy the bysbour is hys stewarde

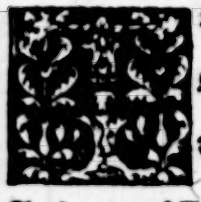
¶ Whiche is a ryche man wythouten fraude
He that can to hys good suffyse
what soeuer he hath, he reuerth god therlaude
And kepeth hym clene from all couetyse
He delyzeth nothyng in vngoodly wyse
His body is here, hys mynde is aboue
He is a ryche man, for god dothe hym loue

¶ Who is a foole, is the seuenth demaunde
He that wolde hurte, and hath no powere
Myght he mykell, moche wolde he cõmaũde
His malyce great, his myght nought were
He threteth full faste, full lytell may he dere
Thynketh nat howe men haue sayd before
God sendeth a shrewde cowe a shorte horne

¶ Who is a wyse man, is the eyght question
He that myght nore, and dothe no noyaũce
Myght punyshe, and leaueth punyssyon
A man merryfull without vengeaunce
A wyse man putteth in remembraunce
Hayeng, had I venged all myne harme
My cloche

My clothe had nat be furred halfe so warme.
¶ Explicit.

¶ To the kynges moſt noble grace, and to the lordes and knyghtes of the garter.



O you wele of honour and of worthyneſſe
Our Chriſten kyng, the heire and ſucceſſour
Unto Juſtinians deuout tenderneſſe
In faythe of Jeſu our redemptour
And to you lordes of the garter floure
Of cheualry, as men you clepe and cal
The lorde of vertue, and of grace authour
Graunt the frute of your roſe neuer appal

O liege lorde that haue eke the lykeneſſe
Of Conſtantyne, thenſample and myrrour
To princes all, in humble buriunneſſe
To holy churche o veray ſuſtaynour
And pyller of our fayth, and werryour
Agayne the hereſyes bytter galle
Do forthe do forthe, contynue your ſocour
Holde vp Chriſtes baner lette it nat falle

This yle or this had ben but hethneſſe
Had be of your fayth the force and vigour
And yet this day the fendes crabbydneſſe
Weneth fully to catche a tyme and hour
To haue on vs your lieges a sharpe ſhoure
And to hys ſeruytude vs knyette and thralle
But aye we truſt in you our protectour
On your conſtaunce we awayten alle

Cõmaundeth that no wight haue hardineſſe
O worthy kyng, our Chriſten Emperour
Of the fayth to diſpute more or leſſe
Openly amonge people: her errour
Enpryngeth all day, and engendreth rumour
Maketh ſuch lawe, and for ought may befal
Obſerue it wele, there to be ye dettour
Doth ſo, and god in glorye ſhall you ſtall

Ye lordes eke, ſhynyng in noble fame
To whiche appropried is the mayntenaunce
Of Chriſtes cauſe, in honour of hys name
Shoue on, and put hys foes to vttraunce
God wolde ſo, ſo wolde eke your legiaunce
To tho two prycketh you your duite
Who ſo nat kepeth this double obſeruaunce
Of meryte and honour naked is he

Your ſtyle ſayth, ye be foes to ſhame
Nowe kyth of your fayth the perſeueraunce
In whiche an hepe of vs be halte and lame
Our chriſten kyng of Englande & of Fraũce
And ye my lordes wyth your alyaunce
And other faythfull people that there be
Truſt I to god, ſhal quench al this noyſaũce
And this lande ſette in hyghe proſperite

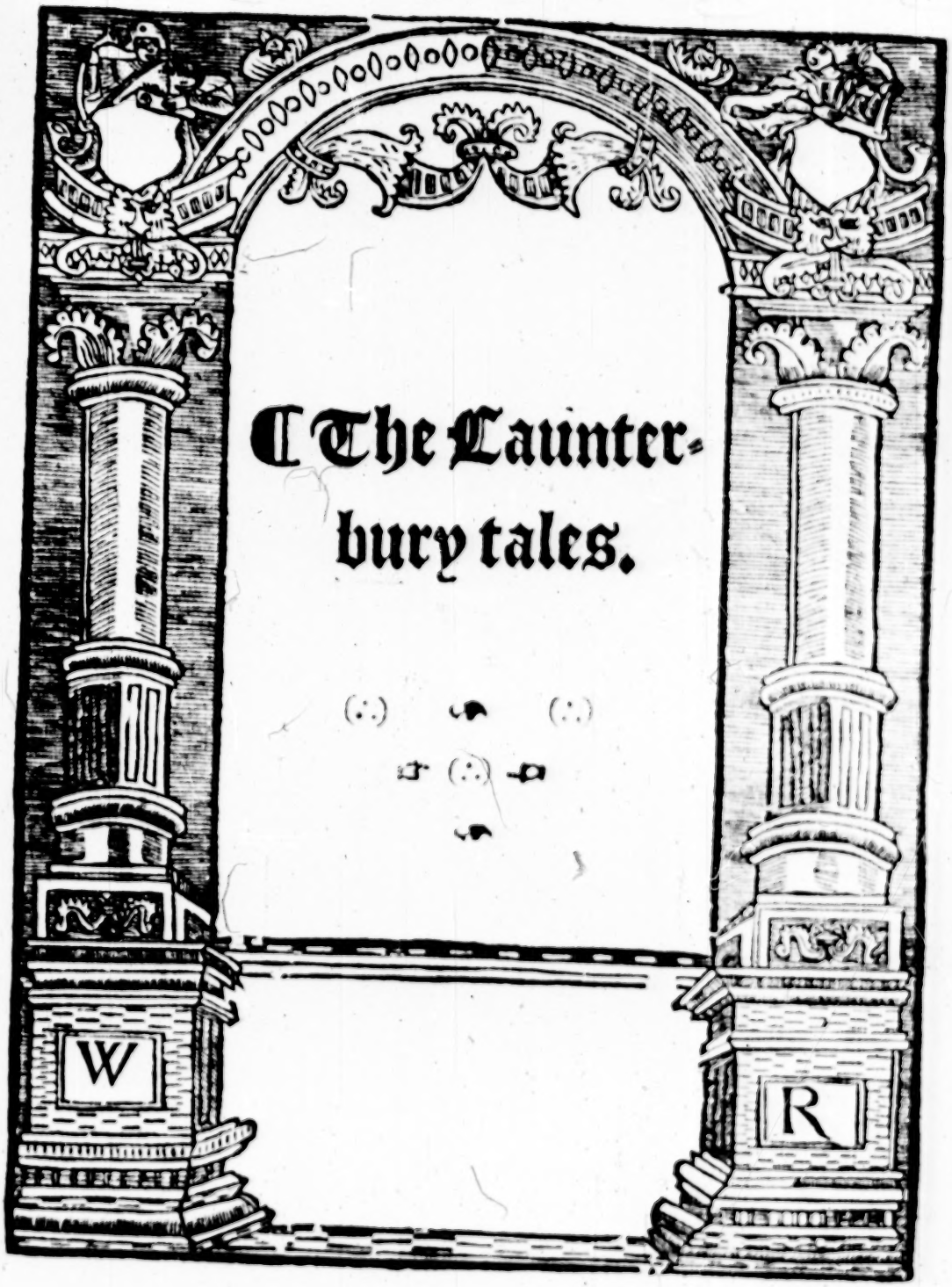
Conqueſt of hyghe proweſſe is for to teme
The wylde woodneſſe of theſe myſcreaunce
Ryght to the rote repe ye that ſame
Slepe nat this, but for goddes pleſaunce
And hys mother, and in ſygnifyaunce
That ye ben of ſaynt Georges lyuere
Doth hym ſeruyce and knyghtly obeyſaunce
For Chriſtes cauſe is hys, well knowen ye

Stiffe ſtand in that, & ye ſhal greue & grame
The foe to peace, the norice of diſtaunce
That nowe is erneſt, tourne it in to game
Nowe kythe of your beleue the conſtaunce
Lorde liege, & lordes haue remembraunce
Lorde of all is the blyſſull Trinyte
Of whoſe vertue the mighty habundaunce
Your herte and ſtrength in faythfull vnyte.
¶ Explicit.

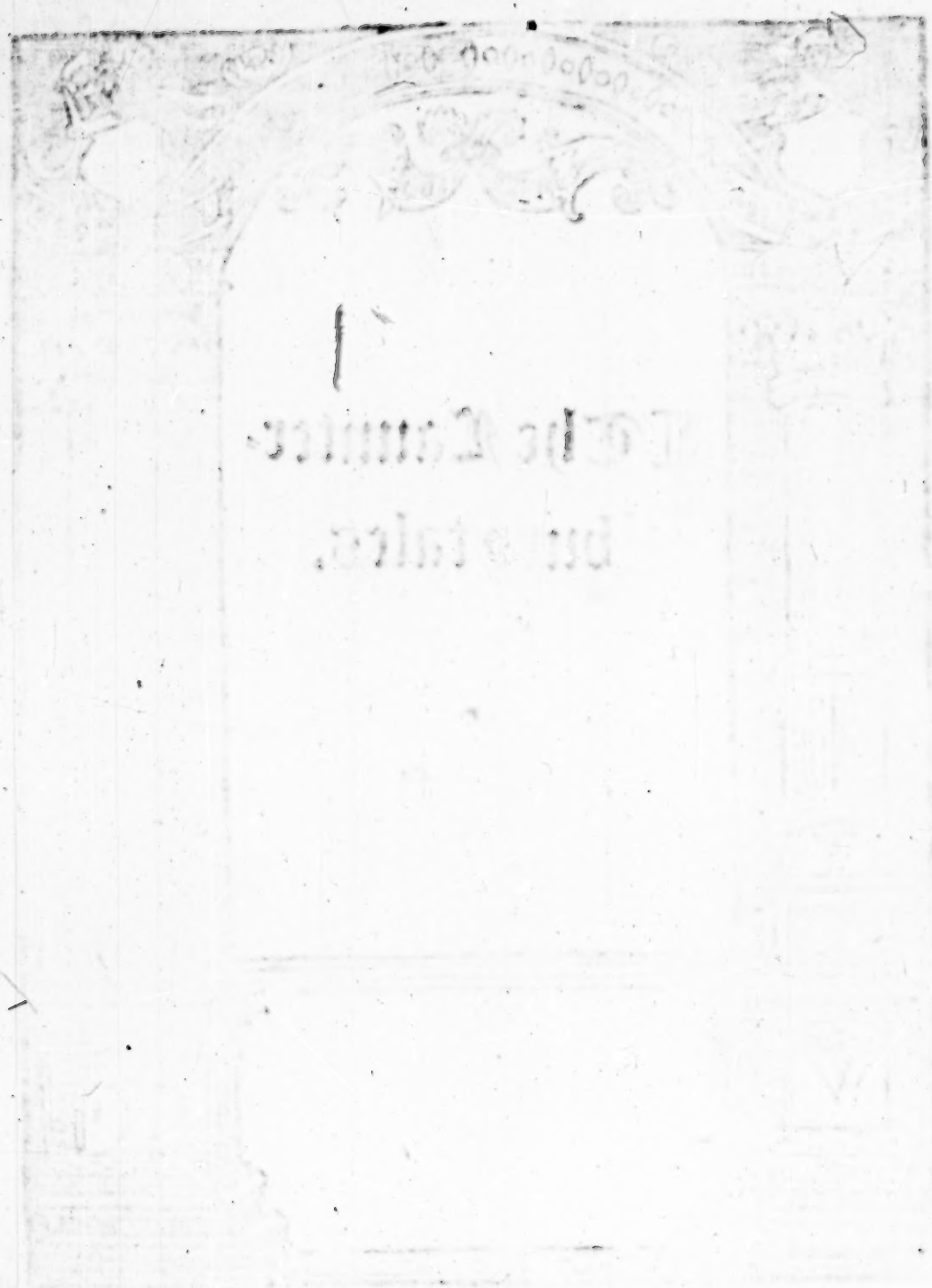


Whan faythe fayleth in preeſtes lawes
And lordes heſtes are holden for lawes
And robbery is holden purchace
And lechery is holden ſolace
Than ſhall the londe of Albyon
Be brought to great confuſyon

It falleth for euery gentylman
To ſaye the beſt that he can
In mannes abſence
And the ſothe in hys preſence
It cometh by kynde of gentyll blood
To caſte away all heynneſſe
And gader togyder wordes good
The werke of wyſedome beareth wytneſſe
FINIS.



¶ The Launter-bury tales.



When that Aprylle
with hys shoures sote
The drought of Marche
had perced the rote
And bathed every veyne
in swiche licoure
Of whych vertue, engen-
dred is the flour
When zephirus eke with hys sote breth
Enspyred hath every holte and heth
The tendre croppes, and the yong sonne
Hath in the Ram halfe hys course yronne
And smale fowles maken melodye
That slepen al nyght with open eye
So pryketh hem nature in her corage
Than longen folke to go on pylgrymage
And palmers to seken straunge strondes
To serve halowes couth in sondry londes
And specially fro every shyres ende
Of Engelonde to Caunterbury they wende
The holy blysful martyr for to seke
That hem hath holpen, when they were seke.

Bifell that season on a day
In Southwarke at the taberde as I lay
Redy to go in my pylgrymage
To Caunterbury with deuoute corage
That nyght was come into that hostelry
Well nyne and twenty in a company
Of sondry folke by auenture yfall
In felyshyp, and pylgrymes were they all
That toward Caunterbury wolde ryde
The chambres and stables weren wyde
And well weren they eased at the best
And shortly whan the sonne was at rest
So had I spoken with hem everychone
That I was of her felyshyp anone
And made forward early for to ryse
To take our way there as I you devyse
But nathelesse, whyle I have tyme and space
Or that I further in this tale pace
Me thynke it accordaunt to reason
To tell you all the condycyon
Of eche of hem so as it semed me
And whyche they were, and of what degre
And eke in what arave that they were in
And at a knyght then wyll I fyrst begyn.

The knyght. I.

A knyght there was, and that a worthy man
That fro the tyme that he fyrst began
To ryden out, he loued chevalrye
Trouth, honoure, fredom, and curtesye
Full worthy was he in hys lordes warre
And therto had he ryden no man farre
As well in christendome as in Hethynesse
And ever had honoure for hys worthynesse
At Alysaundre he was, when it was won
Full ofte tyme he had the bourde begon
Aboven all nations in Prusse
In Lettowe had he ryden and in Luce
No christen man so ofte of hys degre
In Gernade at the syege had he be
At Algezer, and ryden in Belmarye
At Leyes was he, and also at Satalye
When they were wonne, and in the great see
At many a noble armye had he be
At mortall battayles had he been fyftene
And foughten for our fayth at Tramyssene
In lystes thryes, and ave slayne hys fo
This ylke worthy knyght had ben also
Somtyme with the lorde of Palathye
Avenst another hethen in Turkye
And evermore he had a soverayne prys
And though he was worthy he was wys
And of hys porte as meke as is a mayde
He never yet no vylanye ne sayde
In all hys lyfe, unto no manner wyght
He was a verey parfyt gentyll knyght
For to tell you of hys aray
Hys hors were good, but he was nothynge gay
Of fustyan he wered a gypon
All besmotered with hys haubergeon
For he was late come fro hys vyage
And wente for to done hys pylgrymage.

The Squyer. II.

With him there was his sonne a yonge squyre
A lover and a lusty bachelere
With his lockes crul as they were layd in presse
Of twenty yere of age he was I gesse
Of hys stature he was of even length
And wonderly delyver, and of great strength
And he had be somtyme in chyvachye
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and in Pycardye
And borne hym well, as of so lytell space
In hope to stande in hys ladyes grace

Embrowded was he, as it weren a mede
All full of freshe flowres, whyte and rede
Syngynge he was, or floytynge all the daye
He was freshe as is the moneth of Maye
Shorte was hys gowne, with sleues longe and wyde
Well coude he fytte on a horse, and faire ryde
He coude songes make, and well endyte
Juste and eke daunce, portray and well wrytte
So hote he loued, that by nyghtertale
He slept nomore then doth the nyghtyngale
Curteys he was, lowly and seruysable
And kerft before hys father at the table.

The Squyers yoman. iii.

A Yoman had he and seruaunte no mo
At that tyme, for hym lyst to ryde so
And he was clad in cote and hode of grene
A sheffe of pecocke arowes bryght and shene
Under hys belt he bare full thryftely
Well coude he dresse hys tackle yomanly
Hys arowes drouped not with fethers lowe
And in hys hande he bare a mighty bowe
A not heed had he, with a broune visage
Of wodde crafte well couth he all the vsage
Upon hys arme he bare a gaye bracer
And by hys syde a swearde and a bokeler
And on that other syde a gay dagger
Harneysed well, and sharpe as poynte of spere
A Christofer on hys brest of syluer shene
An horne he bare, the baudryke was of grene
A forster was he soothly as I gesse.

The Prioresse. iiii.

There was also a Nonne a Prioresse
That of her smylynge was symple and coye
Her greatest othe was by sayne Loye
And she was called dame Eglentyne
Full well she songe the seruyce dyuyne
Entewned in her nose full semely
And Frenche she spake full fetously
After the scole of Stratforde at bowe
For Frenche of Parys was to her vnknowe
At meate was she well ytaught withall
She let no morsell fro her lyppes fall
Ne wette her fyngers in her sauce depe
Well couth she carye a morsell and well kepe
That no drop ne fell vpon her brest
In curtesye was set full moche her lest
Her ouerlyp wyped she so clene
That in her cuppe was no ferthynge sene
Of grece, whan she dronken had her draught
Full semely after her meate she raught
And sykerly she was of great disporte
And full pleasaunt, and amyable of porte
And payned her to counterfete chere
Of courte, and to be stately of manere
And to ben holden digne of reuerence.
But for to speake of her conscience
She was so charitable and so pytous
She wolde wepe yf that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, yf it were deed or bledde
Of smale houndes had she that she fedde
With rosted flesshe, mylke, or wastell breed
But sore wepte she yf any of hem were deed
Or yf men smote hem with a yerde smerte
And all was conscience and tender herte
Full semely her wympple pynched was
Her nose tretes, her eyen gray as glas
Her mouth smale, and therto softe and reed
But sykerly she had a fayre forheed
It was almost a spanne brode I trowe
For sothe she was not vndergrowe
Full fetyse was her cloke as I was ware
Of smale coralle about her arme she bare
A payre of bedes, gauded all with grene
And theron honge a brooche of golde full shene
On whych ther was first wryten a crowned A
And after that Amor vincit omnia.
Another Nonne with her hadde she
That was her chapelayn, and preestes three.

The Monke. v.

A Monke there was, fayre for the maystry
An out ryder, that loued venery
A manly man to ben an abbot able
Full many a deynte horse had he in stable
And when he rode men myght his bridle here
Gyngelynge in a whystlynge wynde as clere
And eke as loude as doth the chapell belle
There as his lorde was seruyse of the cell
The rule of sayne Maure and of sayne Benet
Because it was olde and somdele streyt
This ylke monke let olde thynges pace
And held after the newe worlde the space
He gaue not of the texte a pulled henne
That

That sayeth, that hunters be not holy men
Ne that a monke when he is recheleſſe
Is lykened ... a fyſhe that is waterleſſe
Thys is to saye, a monke out of hys cloyſtre
Thys pilie texte helde he not worth an oyſtre
And I saye hys opinion was good
Wherto ſhulde he ſtudy, & make him ſelfe wood
Upon a boke alwaye in cloyſtre to powre
Or ſwynke wyth hys handes, or labowre
As Auſtyn byd, how ſhulde the worlde be ſerued
Let Auſtyne haue hys ſwynke to hym reſerued
Therfore he was a pryckeſoure a ryght
Greyhoudes he had as ſwyft as foule of flyght
Of pryckynge and of huntynge for the hare
was all hys luſt, for no coſt wolde he ſpare
I ſawe hys ſleeues purfled at the hande
wyth Grice, and that the fyneſt in a lande
And for to faſt hys hoode vnder the chynne
He had of golde wrought a curious pynne
A loue knot in the greater ende there was
Hys heed was balde, and ſhone as any glas
And eke hys face, as he had bene anoynte
He was a lorde full fatte and in good poynte
Hys eyen ſtepe, and rollynge in hys heed
That ſterned as a furneys of a leed
Hys bootes ſouple, hys horſe in great eſtate
Nowe certaynly he was a fayre prelate
He was not pale as a forpyned ghoſt
A fatte ſwanne loued he beſt of any roſt
Hys palfray was as browne as is a bery

The Frere. bi.

A Frere there was a wanton and a merry
A lymytour, a full ſolempne man
In all the ordres foure is none that can
So moche of dalyaunce and fayre langage
He had made full many a marriage
Of ponge women at hys owne coſt
Unto hys order he was a noble poſt
Full well beloued and familyer was he
wyth frankeleyns ouer all in hys countre
And wyth worthy women of the toun
For he had power of confeſſioun
As he ſayd himſelfe, more then a curate
For of hys ordre he was licenciate
Full ſweetely herde he confeſſioun
And pleaſaunt was hys abſolucioun
He was an eaſie man to gyue penaunce
There as he wyſt to haue a good pytaunce
For vnto a poore ordre for to gyue
Is ſygne that a man is well yſhryue
For yf he gaue, he durſt make auaunt
He wyſt that a man was repentaunt
For many a man is ſo harde of herte
That he may not wepe though hym ſmerte
Therfore in ſtede of weepynge and prayres
Men mote gyue ſyluer to the poore freres
Hys typpet was aye faſſed full of knyues
And pynnes, for to gyue fayre wyues
And certaynly he had a merry note
well coude he ſynge and playen on a rote
Of yeddynge he bare vtterly the pryce
Hys necke was whyte as the flour delyce
Therto ſtronge he was as a champioun
And knewe the tauernes well in euery toun
And euery hoſteler and tapſter
Bet then a lazer or a begger
For vnto ſuche a worthye man as he
Accordeth nought, as by hys faculte
To haue wyth lazers ſuche acquayntaunce
It is not honeſt, it may not auaunce
For to deale wyth ſuche poraylle
But all wyth ryche, and ſellers of vytayle
And ouer all there as profyte ſhulde ariſe
Curteys he was, and lowly of ſeruyſe
There nas no man no where ſo vertuous
He was the beſt begger in hys hous
And gaue a certayne ferme for the graunte
None of hys brethren came in hys haunte
For though a wydowe had but a ſhoo
(So pleaſaunt was hys In principio)
Yet wolde he haue a ferthynge er he wente
Hys purchace was better then hys rente
And rage he couth as it were a whelpe
In louedayes there coude he mykell helpe
For there he was not lyke a cloyſtrere
wyth a threde bare cope, as a poore frere
But he was lyke a mayſter or a pope
Of double worſted was hys ſemy cope
So rounded was as a bell out of preſſe
Somwhat he lyſped for hys wantonneſſe
To make hys Engliſhe ſwete vpon hys tonge
And in harpynge, when he had ſonge
Hys eyen twynkeled in hys heed aryght
As done the ſtarres in a froſty nyght
Thys worthye frere was called Huberde

The Marchaunt. bii.

A marchaunt was there with a longe berde
In motley, an hyghe on hys horse he sate
Upon hys heade a Flaundres beuer hat
Hys botes clasped fayre and fetously.
Hys reasons he spake full solempnely
Sowynge alway the encrease of his wynnyng
He wolde the see were kepte for any thynge
Betwyxe Middelburgh and Orewell
Well couthe he in eschaunge sell
Thys worthy man full well hys wyt bysate
There wyst no wyght that he was in det
So stately was he of hys gouernaunce
With hys bargaynes, and with hys chyfraunce
Forsothe he was a worthy man withall
But sothly to sayne, I not what men hym call.

¶ The clerke of Orenforde. viii.

A clerke there was of Orenforde also
That vnto logyke had longe ygo
As leane was hys horse as a rake
And he was nothynge fatte I vndertake
But lokede holowe, and therto soberly
Full thredebare was hys ouercourtepy
For he had yet gotten hym no benefyce
Ne was nought worldly to haue none offyce
For hym was leuer to haue at hys beddes hede
Twenty bookes, clad in blacke or reed
Of Aristotle, and of hys philosophie
Then robes ryche, or fydell or gaye sautrye
But all be that he was a philosophre
Yet had he but a lytle golde in cofre
But all that he myght of hys frendes hente
On bookes and on learnynge he it spente
And besely gan for the soules praye
Of hem that helpen hym to scholaye
Of studye toke he moste cure and hede
Not a worde spake he more then nede
And that was sayd in fourme and reuerence
And shorte and quycke, and of hye sentence
Sownynge in moral vertue was hys spechе
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche

¶ The sergeaunte at lawe. ix.

A sergeaunt of lawe, wyse and wyse
That often had bene at the parvyse
That was also full ryche of excellence
Discrete he was, and of great reuerence
He semed suche, hys wordes were so wyse
Justyce he was full often in assyse
By patent, and by pleyne commyssyoun
For hys science, and hys hye renoun
Of fees and robes had he many one
So great a purchasour was no where none
All was fee symple to hym in effecte
Hys purchasynge myght not be to hym suspecte
Nowhere so bysy a man as he there nas
And yet he semed besyer then he was
In termes had he case and doomes all
That from the tyme of kynge Wyllyam were fall
Therto he could endyte, and make a thynge
There couthe no wyght pynche at hys wrytynge
And euery statute couthe he playne by rote
He rode but homely in a medley cote
Gyrte with a seynt of sylke, with barres smale
Of hys aray, nyl I no longer tale.

¶ The Frankeleyn. x.

A Frankeleyn there was in hys compaynye
Whyte was hys berde, as is the dayesye
And of hys complexyon he was sanguyne
Well loued he by the morowe a sope in wyne
To lyuen in delyte was euer hys wonne
For he was Epycures owene sonne
That held opinion, that playne delyte
Was verely felycyte perfyte
An housholder, and that a great was he
Saynt Julian he was in hys countre
Hys breed, hys ale, was alwaye after one
A better vyended man was no where none
Withoute bake mete was neuer hys house
Of fysshe and flesshe, and that so plenteous
It snewed in hys house of mete and drynke
Of all deyntees that men couthe thynke
After the sondrye sesons of the yere
So chaunged he hys mete, and hys supere
Full many a fatte partrych hadde he in mewe
And many a breme, and many a luce in stewe
Woo was hys cooke, but hys sauce were
Poynaunt and sharpe, and redy all hys gere
Hys table dormaunt in hys hall alwaye
Stode redy couered all the longe daye
At sessyons there was he lorde and syre
Full often tyme he was knyght of the shyre
An anelace and a gypsere all of sylke
Hynge at hys gyrdell, whyter then the mylke
A shyrreue had he bene, and a countour
Was nowhere such a worthy vauasour.

The

¶ The Haberdasher. xi.

An Haberdasher there was and a carpenter
A webbe, a dyer, and a tapyser
All they were yclothed in o lyuere
Of a solempne and a great fraternyte
Full freshe and newe her gere ypyght was
Her knyues ychaped were not with bras
But all with syluer wrought full clene and wele
Her gyrdels and her pouches euerydele
Wel semed eueryche of hem a fayre burgeys
To sytten at a yelde hal, on the hye deys
Eueryche for the wysdome that he can
Was shaye ly che for to ben an alderman
For catayle had they ryght ynough and rent
And eke her wyues wolde it well assent
And elis certayne they were to blame
It is full fayre to ben yeleped madame
And go to vigyles al before
And have a mantel royallyche yborne.

¶ The Cooke. xii.

A Cooke they had with hem for the nones
To boyle the chykens and the mary bones
And poudre merchaunt tarte, and galyngale
Well coude he knowe a draught of London ale
He coude rosthe, sethe, boyle, and fry
Bake mortrews, and wel bake a pye
But great harme was it, as it thought me
That on hys shynne a mormal had he
And blynde maneer made he with the beste.

¶ The Shypman. xiii.

A Shipman was ther, wonnyng fer by west
For aught I wote, he was of Dertheme wuthe
He rode vpon a rouney, as he couthe
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee
A dagger hangyng by a lace had he
Aboute hys necke, vnder hys arme adowne
The hote sommer had made his hew al brotone
And certayne he was a good felawe
Full many a draught of wyne had he drawe
From Burdeux ward, while y chapman slepe
Of nyce conscience toke he no kepe
If that he faught, and had the hygher honde
By water he sent hem home to euery londe
But of hys craft, to reken wel hys tydes
Hys stremes and his daungers hym besydes
Hys herbergh, hys moone, and hys lodemanage
There was none suche from Hul to Cartage
Hardy he was, and wyse to vndertake
With many a tempest had hys berde be shake
He knewe all the hauens as they were
Fro Scotlande to the Cape de fynesterre
And euery creke in Britayne and in Spayne
Hys barge was called the Maudelayne.

¶ The doctour of Phisyke. xiiii.

With vs there was a doctour of phisyke
In thys worlde ne was there none hym lyke
To speke of phisyke, and of surgerye
For he was grounded in Astronomye
He kepte hys pacyent a full great del
In houres, by hys magyke naturel
Wel couthe he fortune the ascendent
Of hys ymage for hys pacyent
He knewe the cause of euery maladye
Were it of colde, hete, moyste, or drye
And where of engendred what humour
He was a very perfyte practysour
The cause yknowe, and of hys harme the rote
Anone he gaue to the syke man his bote
Full redy had he hys apotecaries
To sende hym drogges and hys letuaries
For eche of hem made other for to wynne
Her frendshyp was not newe to begynne
Wel knewe he the olde Esculapius
And Dioscorides, and eke Rufus
Olde Hippocrates, Haly, and eke Galien
Serapion, Razis, and also Auycen
Auerroys, Damascene, and Constantyn
Bernarde, Gatisden, and Gylbertyn
Of hys dyete mesurable was he
For it was of no superfluyte
But of great nourysshynge, and digestyble
Hys study was but lytel on the Byble
In sangwyne and in perse he clad was al
Lyned with Taffata, and with sendal
And yet he was but esy of dispence
He kepte that he wanne in tyme of pestylence
For golde in Phisyke is a cordyal
Therfore he louede golde in speryal.

¶ The wyfe of Bathe. xv.

A good wyfe there was beside Bathe
But she was somdel dese, and that was scathe

In

Of clothe makynge she had suche an haunte
She passed hem of Ypre, and of Gaunte
In all the parysshe wyfe ne was there none
That to the offrynge before her shulde gone
And yf there dyd, certayn ryght wrothe was she
That she was al out of charite
Her kerchers ful fyne were of grounde
I durst swere they wayden ten pounde
That on a Sonday were vpon her heed
Her hosen were of fyne scarlet reed
Full strayte ystrayned, and shoes ful newe
Bolde was her face, and reed was her hewe
She was a worthy woman al her lyue
Husbandes at the churche dore had she fyue
Withouten other company in youthe
But therof nedeth not to speke as nouthe
And thryse had she ben at Hierusalem
She had passed many a straunge streme
At Rome had she ben, and at Boloyne
In Galys at saynt James, and at Coloyne
She couth moche of wandrynge by the waye
Gat tothed was she sothely for to saye
Upon an ambler easely she sat
Ywympled well, and on her heed an hat
As brode as is a bokeler or a targe
A foot mantel aboute her hyppes large
And on her fete a payre of spurres sharpe
In felyshyp well couth she laughe and carpe
Of remedyes of loue she coude perchaunce
For she couth of that arte the olde daunce.

¶ The Person. xvi.

A Good man there was of relygyoun
And was a poore person of a toun
But rych he was of holye thought and werke
He was also a lerned man, a clerke
That Christes gospels truely wolde preche
Hys parisshens deuoutly wolde he teche
Benygne he was and wonder dylygent
And in aduersyte full pacyent
And suche he was proued ofte sythes
Full lothe were hym to curse for his tythes
But rather wolde he yeuen out of doute
Unto hys poore parysshens aboute
Of hys offrynge, and of hys substaunce
He couth in lytel thynge haue suffysaunce
Wyde was hys parisshe, & houses ferre a sondre
But he ne lefte nyther for rayn ne thondre
In sickenesse nor in mischefe for to vysyte
The ferreste in hys parysshe, moche & lyte
Upon hys fete, and in hys hande a staf
Thys noble ensample to hys shepe he yaf
That fyrst he wrought, and afterwarde taught
Out of the gospel he the wordes caught
And thys fygure he added eke therto
That yf golde ruste, what shulde yron do
For yf a preest be foule, on whom we trust
No wonder is a lewde man to rust
And shame it is, yf a preest take kepe
To se a shytten shepherde, and a clene shepe
Wel ought a preest ensample for to yeue
By hys clennesse, howe hys shepe shulde lyue
He sette not hys benefyce to hyre
And lefte hys shepe accombre in the myre
And renne to London to saynt Poules
To seken hym a chaunterye for soules
Or with a brotherhede to be withholde
But dwelte at home, and kepte wel hys folde
So that the wolfe ne made hem not myscarye
He was a shepherde, and not a mercenarye
And though he holy were and vertuous
He was not to synfull men dyspytous
Ne of hys speche daungerous ne digne
But in hys techyng discrete and benygne
To drawen folke to heuen with fayrnesse
By good ensample, thys was hys busynesse
But yf it were any person obstynate
What so he were of hye or lowe estate
Hym wolde he snybbe sharply for the nonis
A better preest I trowe no where none is
He waited after no pompe ne reuerence
Ne maked hym no spyced conscience
But Christes lore, and hys Apostels twelue
He taught, but fyrst he folowed it hym selue.

¶ The Plowman. xvij

With him there was a Plowman his brother
That had ladde of dunge many a fother
A trewe swynker and a good was he
Lyuynge in peace, and parfyte charyte
God loued he best with al hys herte
At all tymes, thoughe hym gamed or smerte
And than hys neyghbours ryght as hym selfe
He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delfe
For Christes sake, for euery poore wyght
Withouten hyre, yf it lay in hys myght
Hys tythes payde he full fayre and well
Bothe of hys propre swynke, and of hys catel

In a

In a tabarde he rode, vpon a mare
There was also a Reue, and a Millare
A Somnour, and a Pardoner also
A Manciple, and my self, there was no mo.

¶ The Millar. xviii.

The Millar was a stoute carle for ꝑ nones
Full byggе he was of brawne, and eke of bones
That proued wel, for ouer al there he cam
At wrastling, he wolde haue away the Ram
He was short shouldred, a thicke gnarre
Ther nas no dore, but he wold heue of the barre
Or breke it, at a renning with his heed
His beerde as any sowe or fore was reed
And therto brode, as it were a spade
Vpon the coppe right of his nose he hade
A werte, and theron stode a tufte of heeres
Reed as the bristeis of a sowes eeres
His nostrels blake were and wyde
A sword and a bokeler bare he by his syde
His mouthe as great was as a furneys
He was a langler and a goliardeys
And that was moste of synne & of harlotrys
Wel couthe he stele corne, and tolde it thryse
And yet he had a thombe of golde parde
A whyte cote and a blewe hoode weered he
A bagge pype wel couthe he blowe and sowne
And therwith al brought he vs out of towne.

¶ The Manciple. xix.

A gentle Manciple there was of the temple
Of whiche al catours myght taken ensemple
For to ben wyse, in byeng of vitayle.
For whether he payde, or took by tayle
Algate he wayted so in his achate
That he was aye before, in good estate
Nowe is not that of god a full fayre grace
That suche a leude mans wyt shall pace
The wysedome of an heape of learned men
Of maysters had he mo than thryse ten
That were of lawe experte, and curyous
Of whyche there was a doseyn in that hous
Worthy to ben stewardes of rente and lande
Of any lorde that is in Englande
To maken hym lyue by his propre good
In honour detteles, but yf he were woode
Or lyue as scarsly as hym lyste desyre
And able to helpen al a shyre
In any ease that might fallen or happe
And yet the Manciple set all her cappe.

¶ The Reue. xx.

The Reue was a sclender colerike man
His beerde was shaue as nye as euer he can
His heere was by his eeres rounde yshorne
His toppe was docked lyke a preest byforne
Full longe were his legges and full leene
Ylyke a staffe, there was no calfe yseene
Wel couth he kepe a garner and a bynne
There was non auditour coude on hym winne
Wel wyst he by the drought, and by the rayne
The yeldynge of his seed, and of his grayne
His lordes shepe, his neet, and his dayrie
His swyne, his horse, his stoore, and his pultrie
Were holy in his Reuys gouernynge
And by his couenaunt yaue he rekenynge
Sithe his lorde was twenty yere of age
There coude no man bringe hym in arrerage
There nas baylly, herde, ne none other hyne
That he ne knewe his sleyght and his couyne
They were a drad of hym as of the deethe
His dwellynge was full fayre vpon an heethe
With grene trees shadowed was his place
He couthe better than his lorde purchace
Full riche he was astored pryuely
His lorde he coude wel please subtelly
To yeue and lene hym of his owne good
And haue a thanke, and yet a cote and hode
In youthe he had learned a good mystere
He was a well good wryght, a carpentere
This Reue sat vpon a ryght good stot
That was al pomel grey, and hyght Scot
A longe surcote of perse vpon he hade
And by his syde he bare a rusty blade
Of Northfolke was this Reue of which I tel
Beside a towne, men clepen it Baldeswel
Tucked he was, as is a frere aboute
And euer he rode hynderest of the route.

¶ The Somnour. xxi.

A Somnour was there with vs in ꝑ place
That had a fyre redde cherubyns face
For sawsefleme he was, with eyen narowe
As hote he was, and lecherous as a sparowe
With skaled browes blacke, and pyled berde
Of his visage chyldren were sore aferde

There

There nas quicksyluer, lytarge, ne brymstone
Boras, ceruse, ne oyle of tartre none
Ne ointement that wolde clense or byte
That hym myght helpe of hys whelkes white
Ne of his knobbes sittynge on hys chekes
Wel loued he garlyke, onyons, and eke lekes
And for to drynke stronge wyne reed as blood
Then wold he speke and crye as he were wood
And whan he had wel dronke the wyne
Than wolde he speke no worde but latyne
A fewe termes had he, two or thre
That he had lerned out of some degre
No wonder is, he herde it al the daye
And ye knowen wel eke howe that a iaye
Can clepe wat, as wel as can the pope
But who so couthe in other thyng hym grope
Than had he spent al hys philosophye
(Aquestio quid iuris) wolde he crye
He was a gentle harlot and a kynde
A better felawe shulde a man nat fynde
He wolde suffre for a quarte of wyne
A good felawe to haue hys concubyne
A twelue monthe, and excuse hym at the full
Ful prively eke a fynche couthe he pul
And yf he fonde o where a good felawe
He wolde teche hym to haue none awe
In such case, of the archedekyns curse
But yf mans soule were in hys purse
For in hys purse he shulde ypunyshed be
Purse is the archedekens hel, sayd he
But wel I wote he lyed right in dede
Of cursyng ought eche synful man drede
For cursyng wol slee, right as assoylyng saueth
And also ware hym of a Significauit
In daunger had he at hys owne gyse
The yonge gyrles of the diocyse
And knew her counsayle, and was of her reed
A garlonde had he set vpon hys heed
As great as it were for an ale stake
A buckeler had he maked hym of a cake.

The Pardoner. fyti.

With hym there rode a gentle Pardonere
Of Rouncyual, hys frende and hys compere
That straight was come fro the court of Rome
Ful loude songe he, come hyther loue come
Thys Sompnour bare hym a stryfe bourdoun
Was neuer trompe of halfe so great a soun
This Pardoner had heere as yelowe as wexe
But smothe it hynge, as doth a stryke of flexe
By ounces hynge hys lockes that he had
And therwith he his sholders ouerspradd
But thynne it lay by culpons one and one
But hode for iolyte weared he none
For it was trussed vp in hys wallet
Hym thought he rode al the newe iet
Discheuyle saue his cappe he rode al bare
Swiche glarynge eyen had he as an hare
A vernacle had he sowed vpon hys cappe
Hys wallet beforne hym in his lappe
Bretful of pardone come from Rome al hote
A voyce he had as smale as hath a gote
No berde had he, ne neuer shulde haue
As smoth it was as it were newe shaue
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare
But of hys craft fro Berwyke vnto ware
Ne was there swiche another pardonere
For in hys male had he a pylowe bere
Whyche as he sayd, was our ladyes veyle
He sayd he had a gobbet of the seyle
That saynt Peter had whan that he went
Vpon the see tyl Jesu Crist hym hent
He had a crosse of latoun ful of stones
And in a glasse he had pygges bones
But with these relyques whan that he fonde
A poore person dwellyng vpon londe
Vpon a day he gate hym more money
Than that person gate in monthes twey
And thus with fayned flatterynge and iapes
He made the person and the people hys apes
But trewly to tellen at the laste
He was in churche a noble ecclesyaste
Wel couthe he rede a lesson or a storie
But alderbest he sange an offertorie
For wel he wyst, whan that songe was songe
He muste preche, and wel afyle hys tonge
To wynne syluer as he wel coude
Therfore he songe so merely and loude.

Nowe haue I tolde you sothly in a clause
The state, the aray, eche noble, and eke the cause
Why that assembled was this company
In Southwerke at this gentyl hostelry
That hyght the Tabarde fast by the Belle
But nowe is tyme to you for to telle
Howe that we baren vs that ylke nyght
Whan we weren in that hostry alyght
And after wol I tel of our vyage
And al the remenaunt of our pylgrymage

But

But nathyle I prayde you alle of your curtesy
That ye ne arette it my folye
Thowgh that I playnly speke in this matere
To telle you hir wordes and eke hir chere
Ne thowgh I spelle hir wordes properly
For this ye knowen as wel as I
Who shal telle a tale after a manne
He moste reherce as ny as ever he canne
Everych worde, yf it be in his charge
All speke he never so rudely ne large
Or elles he moste telle his tale untrewe
Or feyne thynges, or fynde wordes newe
He may not spare alpho he were his brother
He moste as wel saye a worde as another
Christ spake hym selfe full brode in holy writte
And wel I wote no vilanye is it
Eke Plato sayth, who so can hym rede
The wordes moste ben cosyn to the dede
Also I pray you forgeve it me
Al have I not set folke in hir degree
Here in this tale as they shulde stande
My wytte is shorte ye may wel understande.

Greet chere made our host vs everychon
And to the supper sette he vs anon
And served vs with vitayle at the best
Strong was the wyne, and wel dyynke vs lest
A semely man our host was with all
For to ben a marshal in a lordes hall
A large man he was with even stepe
A fayrer burgeys is there none in chepe
Bolde of his speche, wyse and wel ytaught
And of manhode hym lacked right naught
Eke therto he was a right mery man
And after supper playen he began
And spake of myrthe among other thynges
Whan that we had made our reckenynges
And sayd thus, nowe lordynges trewely
Ye ben to me welcome right hertely
For by my trouthe yf I shuld not lye
I sawe not this yere so mery a compayny
Atones, in this herbergh as is nowe
Fayne wolde I don you myrth & I wyst howe
And of a myrthe I am right nowe bethought
To done you ease, and it shall coste nought
Ye gone to Canterbury god moote you spede
The blysful martyr quyte you your mede
And wel I woote as ye gone by the way
Ye shapen you to talken and to play
For trewely comforte ne myrthe is there none
To ryden by the waye as dombe as a stone
And therfore wolde I maken you disporte
As I sayd erst, and done you some confort
And yf you lyke al by one assent
For to stonden at my jugement
And for to worchen as I shall you saye
To morowe whan we ryden on the waye
Nowe be my fadres soule that is deed
But ye be mery I wol gyve you myne heed
Holde up your handes withouten more speche
Our counsayle was not longe for to seche
Us thought it was not worth to make it wyse
And graunted hym withouten more avyse
And badde hym saye hys verdit as hym lest
Lordynges, quod he nowe herkene for the best
But take it not I praye you in disdayne
Thys is the poynt to speke it platte & playne
That eche of you to shorte with others way
In this vyage shall tel tales tweye
To Canterbery warde I mene it so
And homwardes he shal tel tales other two
Of aventures whilom that han befal
And whiche of you that bereth hym best of al
That is to sayne, that telleth in thys case
Tales of best sentence and most solace
Shall have a supper at our aller cost
Here in this place sytting by this post
Whan that we comme ayen from Canterbery
And for to make you the more mery
I wol my selven goodly with you ryde
Right at myne owne coste and be your gyde
And who that wol my jugement withsay
Shall pave al that we spende by the way
And yf ye vouchsafe that it be so
Telle me anon wythout wordes mo
And I wol early shape me therfore
This thyng was graunted & our othes swore
With full gladde herte, and prayden hym also
That he wolde vouchsafe for to do so
And that he wolde ben our governour
And of our tales jugge and reportour
And sette a supper at a certayne pryse
And we wollen ben ruled at hys devyse
In hye and lowe, and thus by one assent
We ben accorded to the jugement
And therupon the wyne was fette anone
We dronken, and to reste wente ylke one
Withouten any lenger tarying
A morowe whan they gan to spring
Up rose our host, and was our alder cocke

And

And gaderyd hym in a flocke
And in a lyne wyden a hyll more than paas
Unto Canterbury ward of hym Thomas
And there our hoste began hym hastyly arest
And sayd: lordyngs hardame yf you lest
Ye wote your forward wardes, and I it recorde
If ought stonde nowe amys or stonge a corde
Lette se nowe who shall tell the fyrst tale
As ouer I wote he pay for wyne or ale
Who so be yll reuel to my iugement
Shall pay for all that by the way is spent
Nowe draweth cutte or that ye farther twynn
The whyche that hath the shortest shal begynn.

Sir knyght (q he) my maister and my loude
Nowe draweth cutte, for that is myne acorde
Cometh nere (q he) my lady prioresse
And ye sir clerke, lette be your shamefastnesse
Ne studyeth nat, lay hande thertto euery man
Anone to dratwe euery wyght began
And shortely for to tellen as it was
Were it by auenture, or by shapen cas

The sothe is cayst, the cutte fyll to the knyght
Of which ful blyth and glad was euery wyght
And tolden he must hys tale as it was reason
By forwarde, and by compaynon
As ye han herde, what nedeth wordes mo
And whan thys good man sawe yt was so
As he that wyse was and obedyent
To kepen hys forwarde by hys free assent
He sayd, sithen I shall begynne the game
What welcome cutte a goddes name
Nowe lete us ryde, and herkneth what I say
And with that wordes we rydden forth our way
And he begann wyth ryght a merry chere
Hys tale anone, ryght as ye shal here.

¶ Thus ende the prologues of the Caunterbury tales, and here folowyth the knyghtes tale.



Here begynneth the knygbtes tale.

Whylom, as olde stories tellen vs
There was a duke that hyght Theseus
Of Athenes he was lorde & gouernour
And in hys tyme suche a conquerour
That greater was non vnder the son
Full many a riche countrey had he won
What with his wysedom, and his chevalry
He conquered all the reigne of Femeny
That whylom was ycleped Scythea
And wedded the quene Ipolyta
& brought her home w̄ him, in to his contre
With mykell glory and solempnyte
And eke her yonge suster Emely.
And thus with victory and melody
Let I thys worthy duke to Athenes ryde
And all hys host in armes hym by syde
And certes, yf it were to longe to here
I wolde have told fully the manere
Howe wonnen was the reygne of Femeny
By Theseus and by his chevalry
And of the great batayle for the nones
Betwene Athenes and Amasones
And howe beseged was Ipolyta
The yonge hardy quene of Scythea
And of the feest ỳ was at her weddynge
And of the tempest at her home comyng
But al ỳ thyng, I mote as nowe forbere
I have god wotte, a large feide to ere
And wicked ben the oxen in the plowe
The remenaunt of my tale is long ynowe
I wyll nat letten eke, non of thys route
Let euery felowe telle hys tale about
And let se nowe, who shall the supper wyn
And there I lefte, I wyll agayne begyn.

Thys duke, of whom I make mencyoune
When he was come almost to the towne
In all hys wele and hys most pride
He was ware, as he cast hys eye aside
where that there kneled in the hyghe wey
A company of ladys, twey and twey
Eche after other, clad̄e in clothes blake
But such a crye and such a wo they make

That in thys worlde, nys creature lyuynge
That euer herde suche a waymentynge
And al thys crye, they nolde neuer stynten
Tyll they the reynes of hys bridell henten
What folke be ye, ꝑ at myn home comyng
Perturben so my feest with cryeng
Quod Theseus. Haue ye so great envy
Of myne honour, that thus cõplayne & crye
Or who hath you mysbode, or offended
Nowe telleth me, yf it may be amended.
And why that ye be clothed thus in blake
The oldest lady of them all spake
Whan she had swouned with adversity there
That it was ruthe for to se and here
And she sayd lorde, to whom fortune hath yeue
Victory, and as a conquerour to lyue
Nought greueth vs your glory and honour
But we beseche you of mercy and socour
And haue mercy on our wo and distresse
Some drope of pyte, through thy gentylnesse
Vpon vs wretched wymmen, let thou fall
For certes lorde, there nys none of vs all
That she ne hath be a duchesse or a quene
Nowe be we caytyues, as it is well sene
Thanked be fortune, and her false whele
That non estate assureth for to be wele.
Nowe certes lorde, to abyde your presence
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemẽce
We haue be waytyng all this fourtenyght
Helpe vs lorde, syth it lyeth in thy myght.

I Wrecche, that wepe and wayle thus
whylom wyfe to kyng Campaneus
That starke at thebes, cursed be ꝑ day
And all we that ben in thys aray
And maken all thys lamentacyon
We losten all our husbondes at that town
Whyle that the syege there about laye
And yet the olde Creon (wel awaye)
That lorde is nowe of Thebes cyte
Fulfilled of pyte and of iniquite
He for dispyte, and for hys tyranny
To done the dede bodyes vylanye
Of all our lordes, whiche that ben slawe
Hath all the bodyes on an heape ydrawe
And wyll nat suffre hem, by none assent
Neyther to be buryed, ne to be brent
But maketh houndes to eate hem in dyspyte
And ꝑ to that worlde, wythout more respyte
They fallen grouely, and cryen pytously
Some on vs wretched wymmen some mercy
And let our sorowe synke in thyn hert

This gentle duke down fro̅ his hors sterte
Wyth herte pytous, whã he herde hem speke
Hym thought that hys herte wolde breke
Whan he sawe hem so pytous and so mate
That whylom were of so great astate
And in hys armes, he hem all vp hent
And hem comforted in full good entent
And swore hys othe, as he was true knyght
He wolde don so ferforthly hys myght
Vpon the tyrante Creon hem to wreke
That al the people of Grece shulde speke
Howe Creon was of Theseus yserued
As he that had hys deth full well deserued
And ryght anon wythouten more abode
His baner he displayed, and forthe rode
To Thebes warde, and all hys hoost besyde
No nere Athenes nolde he go ne ryde
Ne take hys ease fully half a day
But onward on hys way that nyght he lay
And sent anone Ypolita the quene
And Emely her yonge syster shene
Vnto the towne of Athenes to dwell
And forth he rydeth, ther nys no more to tell.

The red statu of Mars ꝺ spere & targe
So shyneth in hys whyte baner large
That all the feldes glysteren vp & doun
And by hys baner, borne is hys penon
Of golde ful rych, in which there was ybete
The mynotaure, that he wan in Crete
Thus rydeth this duke, thus conquerour
And in hys hoste of chyualry the flour
Tyl that he came to Thebes, and alyght
Faire in a feelde, ther as he thought to fyght
But shortly for to speken of thys thyng
Wyth Creon, whiche was of Thebes kyng
He faught, & slewe hym manly as a knyght
In playne batayle, & put hys folke to flyght
And at a saute he wan the cyte after
And rente adowne wall, sparre, and rafter
And to the ladyes, he restored again
The bodyes of her husbandes ꝑ were slayn
To done obsequies, as tho was the gyse
But it were al to longe for to deuyse
The great clamour, and the wofull mourning
That the ladyes made at the brennyng
Of the bodyes, and the great honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour
Dyd to ꝑ ladies, whan they from him went
But shortly to tellen is myne entent
Whan ꝑ this worthy duke, this Theseus
Hath Creon slayne, and wan Thebes thus

Stylle

Tyl in the felde he toke al nyght hys reſt
And dyd with al the countre as hym leſt
To ranſake in the taas of bodyes dede
(Them for to ſtrype of harneys and of wede)
The pyllours dyd her buſyneſſe and cure
After the batayle and the diſcomfyture.
And ſo befell, that in the taas they founde
Through grut th many a greuous wounde
Two ponge knyghtes lyeng by and by
Bothe in armes ſame, wrought full richely
Of whiche two, Arcyte byght that one
And that other byght Palamon
Not fully quycke, ne fully dede they were
But by her cote armours, and by her gere
The harauldes knewe hem beſt in ſpeyall
As two that weren of the bloode royall
Of Thebes, and of ſyſtren two yborne
Out of the taas the pyllours hath hem borne
And hym hem caryed ſofte unto the tente
Of Theſeus, and he ful ſone hem ſente
To Athenes, to dwellen there in priſon
Perpetuall, he nolde hem not raunſon
And whan this worthy duke had this idon
He toke his hooſt, and home he gothe anon
With laurer crowned, as a conquerour
And there he lyueth in love and honour
Terme of his lyfe, what neden wordes mor
And in a towre, in anguyſſe and in woo
Dwelleth Palamon, and his felowe Arcyte
For euermore, ther may no gold hem quyte.

(Day

THus paſſeth yere by yere, and day by day
Til it fel ones in a morowe of May
That Emely, ſhe fayrer was to ſene
Than is the lylly, upon the ſtalke grene
And freſcher than the May, with flowres newe
For whych the roſe colour ſtrof her hewe
I nyl not whiche was the fayrer of hem two.
Er it was day, as was her wone to do
She was aryſen, and all redy dyght
For May wol have no ſlogardy a nyght
The ſeaſon pryketh every gentil herte
And maketh it out of his ſlepe ſterte
And ſayth aryſe, and do thyn obſeruaunce
This maketh Emely to have remembraunce
To don honour to May, and ryſe in tyme
I clothed was ſhe freſſhe for to deuyſe
Her yelowe heare was broyded in a treſſe
Behynde her backe, a yerde longe I gaſe
And in the gardyn at ſonne upryſt
She walketh up and downe as hyr lyſt
She gadreth flowres, party whyte and reed
To make a ſtedefaſt garlande for her heed
And as an angell, hevenly ſhe ſonge
The great tour, that was ſo thicke and ſtronge
Whiche of the caſtell was the chefe dungeon
Wherin the knyghtes were in priſon
Of whiche I tolde you, and tell ſhall
Was even joynaunt to the garden wall
There as this Emely had her playeng
Bright was the ſon, and clere that morwynge
And Palamon, this woful priſoner
As was his won, by leaue of his gayler
Was ryſen, and romed in a chambre on hyghe
In whiche he all the noble cyte syghe
And eke the gardyn, full of braunches grene
There as this freſſhe Emely the ſhene
Was in her walke, and romed up and down
This ſorowfull priſoner, this Palamon
Gothe in his chambre romyng to and fro
And to hym ſelfe complayneng of his woo
That he was borne, ful ofte ſayd alas
And ſo befell by aduenture or caas
That through a windowe thick of many a bar
Of yren grete, and ſquare as any ſpar
He caſte his eyen upon Emelia
And therwith he blent and cryed, ha.
As though he ſtongen were to the herte
And with that cry Arcite anon up ſterte
And ſayd, Coſyn myne, what eyleth the
That arte ſo pale and deedly for to ſe
Why cryeſt thou: who hath do the offence
For goddes love, take all in pacience
Our priſon, for it may none other be
Fortune hath geven us this aduerſyte,
Some wycked aſpect or diſpoſycion
Of Saturne, by ſome conſtellacion
Hath geven us this, albeit we had it ſworn
So ſtode the heuen, whan that we were born
We muſte endure, this is ſhort and playn.
This Palamon anſwerde, and ſayd agayn:
Coſyn forſooth, of this opynyon
Thou haſt a vayne ymagynacyon
This priſon cauſed me nat to cry
But I was hurt right now thurgh myne ey
Into myne herte, that wyll my bane be
The fayrneſſe of a lady, that I ſe
Ponde in the gardyn, rombyng to and fro
Is cauſe of all my crying and woo
I not whether ſhe be woman or goddeſſe
But Venus it is, ſoothly as I geſſe
And therwith all on knees doun he fyl
And ſayd: Venus, yf it be thy wyl
Yow in this gardyn, thus to tranſfigure

Beholde me, thy moste wrecched creature
Out of this prison helpe that we may scape
And yf our destenye be so shape
By eterne worde, to dyen in prysón
Of our lynage haue some compassion
That is so lowe ybrought by vylanny.
And wyth that worde Arcyte gan espy
Where as the lady romed to and fro
And wyth that syght her beaute hurt hym so
That yf that Palamon were wounded sore
Arcyte was hurt as moche as he, or more
And with a syghe he sayd pitously
The fresshe beautie sleeth me sodenly
Of her that rometh in the yonder place
And but I haue her mercy and her grace
That I may seen her at the leste way
I nam but deed, there nis no more to say.

This Palamó, whã he these wordes herd
Dispytously he loked, and answerd:
Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play
Nay quod Arcite, in ernest by my fay
God helpe me so, me lyst full yuell to play
This Palamó gan knyt his browes twey
It were (q he) to the no great honour
To be false ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosen and thy brother
Ysworne full depe, and eche of vs to other
That neuer for to dyen in the payne
Tyll that the dethe departe vs twayne
Neyther of vs in loue to hyndre other
Ne in none other case my leue brother
But that thou shuldest truly further me
In euery case, as I shulde further the
This was thyn othe, and myn also certayn
I wote it well, thou darst it not wythsayn
Thus arte thou of my counsell out of doute
And nowe thou wouldest falsly ben aboute
To loue my lady, whom I loue and serue
And euer shall, tyll that myn herte sterue
Nowe certes false Arcite thou shalt not so
I loued her fyrst, and tolde the my wo
As to my counsell, and to my brother sworne
To further me, as I haue tolde beforne
For whiche thou art bounden, as a knyght
To helpen me, yf it lye in thy myght
Or elis arte thou false, I dare well sayne
This Arcite full proudly spake agayne.
Thou shalt (q he) be rather false than I
And thou art false I tell the verely
For paramour I loued her fyrst or thou
What wilt thou sayn, thou wist it nat or now
Whether she be woman or goddesse
Thyne is affection of holynesse
And myne is loue, as to a creature
For which I tolde the myne auenture
As to my cosyn, and my brother sworne
Suppose that thou louest her byforne
Wost thou not well the olde clerkes sawe
That, who shall gyue a louer any sawe
Loue is a greter lawe by my pan
Than may be yeuen to any erthly man
And therfore posityf lawe, and such decree
Is broken all day for loue in eche degree
A man must nedes loue maugre hys heed
He may not flen it though he shulde be deed
All be she mayde, wydowe, or wyfe
And eke it is not lykely all thy lyfe
To stonden in her grace, no more shall I
For well thou wost thy selfe verely
That thou and I be dampned to prysón
Perpetuall, vs gayneth no raunsón
We stryuen, as did the houndes for the bone
That fought al day, & yet her part was non
Ther cam a kyte, while that they were so wroth
And bare away the bone fro hem bothe
And therfore, at kynges court my brother
Eche man for hym selfe, ther is non other
Loue if thou lyst, for I loue and ay shall
And soothly leue brother thys is all
Here in thys prysón moste we endure
And euerych of vs take hys auenture
Gret was the strife betwix hem twey
If that I had leyser for to sey
But to the ende, it happed on a day
To tell it you shortly as I may.
A worthy duke that hyght Perithous
That felowe was to duke Theseus
Syth chylde hode they were chyldren lyte
Was come to Athenes, hys felow to vysyte
And for to play, as he was wont to do
For in this worlde he loued no man so
And he loued hym as tenderly agayne
So well they loued, as olde bokes sayne
That whe that one was deed, soothly to tell
Hys felow went & sought hym down in hell
But of that story lyst me not to write
Duke Perithous loued well Arcite
And had hym know at Thebes yere by yere
And finally at request and prayere
Of Perithous, without any raunsón
Duke Theseus let hym out of prysón
Freely to go, whither hym lyst ouer all
In suche a space, as I you tellen shall.

Thys was the forewarde, playnly to endyte
Betwyx duke Theseus and hym Arcite
That yf so were, that Arcite were yfounde
Ever in hys lyfe, by daye, nyght or stounde
In any countre of thys duke Theseus
And he were caught, it was accorded thus
That wyth a swerde he shulde lese hys herd
There nas none other remedy ne reed
But taketh hys leave, and homward hym sped
Let hym bewarc, hys neckc lyeth to wedde
Howe great sorowe suffreth nowe Arcite
The death he feleth thyough hys herte smyte
He wepeth, waylcth, and cryeth pyteously
To slem hym selfe he wayteth pryvely
And sayd, alas the daye that I was borne
Nowe is my prison worse then before
Nowe is me shapped eternally to dwell
Not in purgatory, but in hell
Alas that ever I knewe Perithous
For els had I dwelt wyth Theseus
Yfettred in hys prison ever mo
Then had I be in blysse, and not in wo
Onely the syght of her, whom that I serve
Though that I never her grace maye deserve
Wolde have sufficed eyght ynough for me
O dere cosyn Palamon, quod he)
Thyne is the victory of thys aventure
Full blysfull in prison mayst thou endure
In prison May certes but in paradyse
Well hath fortune to the tourned the dyse
That hast the syght of her, and I thabsence
For possible is, sythnes thou hast her presence
And arte a knyght, a worthy man and able
That by some cace, syn fortune is chaungeable
Thou mayst some tyme to thy desyre attayne
But I that am exiled, and barayne
Of all grace, and in so great dyspeyre
That ther nys worker, erth, lyre ne eyre
Ne creature, that of hem maked is
That may me heale, or done comforte in thys
Well ought I sterve in wanhope and dystresse
Farwell my lyfe, my lust and my gladnesse
Alas, why playnen men so in comune
Of purveyaunce of God, or of fortune
That veleth hem full ofte in many a gyse
Well better then hem selfe can devyse
Some man desyreth to have rychesse
That cause is of her murdre or sykenesse
And some man wolde out of hys prison fayne
That in hys house is of hys meyne slayne
Infinite harmes bene in thys matere
We wote not what thynge we prayen here
we faren as he, that dronke is as a mouse
A dronken man wote well, he hath an house
But he wote nat, whych the eyght waye thyder
And to a dronken man the waye is slyder
And certes in thys worlde so fare we
we seken fast after felicite
But we go wronge full ofte truly
Thus may we saye al, and namely I
That wende, and had a great opinion
That yf I myght scape fro prison
Then had I bene in hope and parfyte hele
There nowe I am exiled fro my wele
Syth that I may not sene you Emely
I nam but dede, there nys no remedy
Upon that other syde Palamon
When that he wyst Arcite was gone
Such sorowe he maketh, that the great toure
Resowned of hys yellynge and clamoure
The pure fetters on hys shynnes grete
were of hys bytter salte trares wete
Alas (quod he) Arcite cosyn myne
Of all our stryfe, god wote the frute is thyne
Thou walkest nowe in Thebes at large
And of my wo, thou recchest lytle charge
Thou mayst, syth thou hast wisedome & manhed
Assemble al the folke of our kynred
And make warre so sharpe in thys countre
That by some aventure, or by some treaty
Thou mayst have her to lady and to wyfe
For whom I must nedes lese my lyfe
For as by waye of possibilite
Syth thou arte at thy large of prison free
And arte a lorde, great is myne avauntage
More then is myne, that sterve here in a cage
For I may wepe and wayle, whyles I lyve
With all the wo that prison may me yeve
And eke with payne, that love yeveth me also
That doubleth al my torment and my wo
Therwyth the fyre of ielousy up sterte
within hys brest, and hent hym by the herte
So wodely, that he lyke ly was to beholde
The bore tree, or the asshen dede and colde
Then sayd he. O cruell goddes, that governe
Thys worlde wyth your worde eterne
And wryten in the table of Athamant
Your parliament and eterne graunt
what is mankynde more unto you yholde
Then is the shepe, that rouketh in the folde
For slayne is man, eyght as another beest
And dwelleth eke in prison, and in arrest
And hath sykenesse, and great aduersite
And ofte tyme gyltelesse parde

What gouernaunce is in thys prescience
That gyltlesse turmenteth innocence
And encreaseth thus all my penaunce
That man is bounden to hys obseruaunce
For goddes sake, to letten of hys wyll
There as a beest maye all hys lustes fulfyll
And when a beest is deed, he hath no payne
But after hys death mã mote wepe and playne:
Though in thys worlde he haue care and wo
wythout doute it maye standen so.
The answere of thys lete I to diuines
But well I wote, in thys worlde great pyne is
Alas I se a serpent or a theefe
That many a true man hath do mysdeele
Gone at hys large, & where hym lyst may turne
But I mote bene in prison thrugh Saturne
And eke through Juno, ielous and eke wood
That hath stroyed well nye all the blood
Of Thebes, wyth hys wast walles wyde
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For ielousye, and feare of hym Arcite.
Nowe wyll I stynte of Palamon a lyte
And let hym in hys prison stylle dwell
And of Arcite forth will I you tell
The sommer passeth, and the nyghtes longe
Encreaseth double wyse the paynes stronge
Both of the louer, and of the prisoner
I not wheth hath the wofuller mysser
For shortly to saye, thys Palamon
Perpetuall is dampned to prison
In chaynes and feters to the deed
And Arcite is exiled on hys heed
For euermore as out of that countre
Ne neuer more shall hys lady se
Now louers axe I now thys question
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamon
That one maye se hys lady daye by daye
But in prison mote he dwell alwaye
That other where hym lyst maye ryde or go
But serue hys lady shall he neuer mo
Nowe demeth as ye lyst, ye that can
For I will tell forth my tale as I began
When that Arcite to Thebes comen was
Full ofte a daye he swelte and sayd alas
For serue hys lady shall he neuer mo
And shortly to concinde all hys wo
So mykell sorowe made neuer creature
That is or shalbe, whyle the worlde maye dure
Hys slepe, hys meate, hys drynke is hym byraft
That leane he wareth, and dry as a shaft
Hys eyen holowe, and gryslly to beholde
Hys hewe pale, and salowe as asshen colde
And solitary he was, and euer alone
And waylynge all the nyght, makynge mone
And yf he herde songe or instrument
Then wolde he wepe, he myght not stent
So feble were hys spirites, and so lowe
And chaunged so, ỳ no man coude hym knowe
Hys speche ne hys voyce, though men it herde
As in hys gryse, for all the worlde it ferde
Nought comly lyke to louers maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lyke manye
Engendred of humours melancolyke
Before hys cell fantastyke
And shortly was turned all vp so doun
Both habyte and dysposicion
Of hym, thys wofull louer Arcyte
what shulde I all daye of hys wo endyte
When he endured had a yere or two
Thys cruell torment, and thys payne and wo
At Thebes in hys countre, as I sayd
Vpon a nyght in slepe as he hym layde
Hym thought how that the winged Mercury
Before hym stode, and bad hym to be mery
Hys slepy yerde in hande he bare vpryght
An hatte he werid vpon hys heares bryght
Arayed was thys god, as he toke kepe
As he was, when Argus toke hys slepe
And sayd him thus, to Athenes shalt thou wend
Ther is the shapen of thy wo an end
And wyth that worde Arcite awoke and stert
Nowe truly howe sore that me smert
Quoth he, to Athenes ryght nowe wyll I fare
Ne for no dreede of death shall I spare
To se my lady, that I loue and serue
In her presence recke I not to sterue
And wyth that worde he caught a great myrrour
And sawe that chaunged was all hys colour
And sawe hys vysage all in another kynde
And ryght anone it ran hym in hys mynde
That sith hys face was so dysfygured
Of maladye, the whych he had endured
He myght well, yf that he bare hym lowe
Lyue in Athenes euermore vnknowe
And serue hys ladye well nyghe daye by daye
And ryght anone he chaunged hys arraye
And clad hym as a poore labourer
And all alone, saue only a squyer
That knewe hys priuete and all hys cas
whych was dysgysed poorely as he was
To Athenes is he gone the nexte waye
And to the courte he wente vpon a daye
And at the gate he proffered hys seruyce
To drugge and drawe, what so men would deuyse

And

And shortely of thys matter for to sayne
He fell in offyce with a chamberlayne
The whiche was dwellyng with Emelye
For he was wyse, and sone couth espye
Of euery seruaunt, whiche that serued here
Well couthe he hewen wodde, & water bere
For he was yong and myghty for the nones
And therto he was strong & bygge of bones
To done that any wyght can him deuyse.
A yere or two he was in thys seruyse
Page of the chambre, of Emely the bryght
And Philostrate he sayd that he hyght
But halfe so well beloued man as he
Ne was there none in court, of hys degre
He was so gentyll of condicyon
That throughout all the court was hys renoun
They sayd that it were a charyte
That Theseus wolde enhaunsen hys degre
And put hym in a worshyp full seruyse
There as he myght hys vertue exercise
And thus with a whyle hys name is spronge
Bothe of hys dedes, and of hys good tonge
That Theseus had taken hym so nere
That of hys chambre he made hym squyere
And yaf hym golde to maynteyn hys degre
And eke men brought hym out of hys contre
From yere to yere full priuely hys rent
But honestly and slyly he it spent
That no man wondred howe he it had
And thus yere in thys wyse hys lyfe he ladde
And bare hym so in peace and eke in werre
There was no man that Theseus hath der.
And in thys blysse lette I nowe Arcyte
And speke I woll of Palamon a lyte.
In derknesse horryble and stronge prison
Thys seuen yere hath sytten thys Palamon
Forpyned, what for wo and distresse
Who feleth double sore and heuynesse
But Palamon, that loue distrayneth so
That wode out of hys wit, he gothe for wo
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuall, and not onely for a yere.
Who coude ryme in Englysshe properly
Hys martyrdom, forsoth it am not I
Therfore I passe as lyghtly as I may
It befell that in the seuenth yere in May
The thyrde nyght, as olde bokes sayne
(That all thys storye tellen more playne)
Were it by auenture or by destayne
As whan a thyng is shapen it shall be
That soon after mydnight, Palamon
By helpyng of a frende brake hys prison
And fleeth the cyte, as fast as he may go
For he had yeue hys gayler drynke so
Of a clarrey, made of certen wyne
With narcotyse and opye, of Thebes fyne
That al ỳ night, though men wolde hym shake
The gayler slept, he might nat awake
And thus he fleeth as fast as he may.
The nyght was short, & fast by the day
That nedes cost he mote hym selfe hyde
And to a groue faste there besyde
With dredfull foote than stalketh Palamon
For shortly thys was hys opinyon
That in ỳ groue he wolde hym hyde al day
And in the nyght then wold he take his way
To Thebes warde, hys frendes for to prey
On Theseus to helpe hym to warrey
And shortly, eyther he wolde lese hys lyfe
Or wynne Emelye vnto hys wyfe
Thys is the fleete, and hys entent playne.
Nowe woll I torne to Arcite agayne
That lytell wyst howe nye was hys care
Tyl ỳ fortune had brought hym in the snare
The mery larke, messanger of day
Salueth in her songe the morowe gray
And fyry Phebus aryseth vp so bryght
That all the orysont laugheth of the syght
And with hys stremes, dryeth in the greues
The syluer dropes, hangyng in the leues
And Arcite, that in the court royall
With Theseus hys squyer principall
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day
And for to don hys obseruaunces to May
Remembryng on the poynt of hys desyre
He on hys courser, startlyng as the fyre
Is ridden in to the feldes hym to play
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye
And to the groue, of whyche I you tolde
By auenture, hys way he gan holde
To maken hym a garlonde of the greues
Were it of wodbynde, or of hawthorn leues
And loude he songe ayenst the sonne shene.
May, with all thy flowres and thy grene
Welcom be thou, fayre freshe May
I hope that I some grene get may
And from hys courser, with a lusty herte
Into the groue full hastely he sterte
And in a path he romed vp and down
There, as by auenture thys Palamon
Was in a bushe, that no man myght hym se
For sore aferde of hys dethe was he
Nothyng ne knewe he, that it was Arcite
God wote he wolde haue trowed full lyte

But ſothe is ſayd, go ſythen many yeres
That ſelde hath eyen, and wodde hath eres
It is full fayre a man to beare hym euen
For al day men mete at vnſet ſteuen
Full ytell woote Arcyte of hys fraude
That was ſo nyghe to herken of hys laude
For in the buſhe ſytteth he now full ſtyll
Whan that Arcyte had romed all hys fyll
And ſongen all the roundell luſtely
In to a ſtudy he fell ſodenly
As don theſe louers in theyr quyent gyles
Now in the croppe, now down in ye brires
Now vp now downe, as boket in a well
Right as the friday, ſothly for to tell
Now it rayneth, now it ſhyneth faſt
Right ſo gan gery Venus ouer caſt
The hertes of her folke, right as her day
Is gerefull, right ſo chaungeth ſhe aray
Selde is the friday all the weke ilyke
Whan ye Arcite had ſonge, he gan to ſyke
And ſet hym downe wythouten any more
Alas (quod he) the day that I was bore
How longe Juno thrugh thy cruelte
Wylt thou warren Thebes the cyte
Alas ybrought is to confuſyon
The blode ryall of Cadmus and Amphyon
Of Cadmus, whiche was the fyrſt man
That Thebes buylt, or fyrſt the town began
And of the cyte fyrſt was crowned kyng
Of hys lynage am I, and of hys ofſpring
By very lyne, as of the ſtocke ryall
And nowe I am ſo caytife and ſo thrall
That he that is my mortal enemy
I ſerue hym, as hys ſquyer poorly
And yet dothe me Juno well more ſhame
For I dare not be knowe myne owen name
But there as I was wont to hyght Arcyte
Now hyght I Philoſtrat nat worth a myte
Alas thou fell Mars, alas thou Juno
Thus hath your yre our lynage all for do
Saue only me, and wretched Palamon
That Theſeus martreth in pryſon
And ouer all thys, to ſleen me vtterly
Loue hath hys fyry darte ſo brennyngly
Iſtycked thrugh my true carefull herte
That shapen was my deth erſt my ſherte
Ye ſleen me wyth youre eyen Emelye
Ye ben the cauſe wherfore I dye
Of all the remenaunt of myne other care
Ne ſet I nat the mountaunce of a tare
So ye I coude do ought to your pleſaunce
And with ye worde he fell down in a traunce
A longe tyme, and afterwarde he vp ſtert
This Palamon thought ye thrugh his hert
He felte a colde ſwerde ſodenly glyde
For yre he quoke, no lenger wolde he abyde
And whan that he had herde Arcites tale
As he were wood, with face derd and pale
He ſterte hym vp, out of the buſhes thycke
And ſayde: Arcyte falſe traytour wycke
Nowe art thou hent, that loueſt my lady ſo
For whom that I haue thy payne and wo
And art my blood, and to my counſell ſworn
As I haue full ofte tolde the here beforn
And haſt be taped here duke Theſeus
And falſly haſt chaunged thy name thus
I wyll be ded, or els thou ſhalt dye
Thou ſhalt nat loue my lady Emelye
But I wyll loue her onely and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortall foe
Though ye I haue no weapen in thys place
But out of pryſon am aſtert by grace
I drede not, that eyther thou ſhalt dye
Or thou ne ſhalt nat louen Emelye
Chuſe which thou wylt, or ye ſhalt not aſcape
This Arcite, with full dyſpytous herte
Whan he hym knewe, and had hys tale herde
As fers as a lyon, pulled out his ſwerde
And ſayd: By god that ſytteth aboue
Ne were it ye thou art ſyck, and wood for loue
And eke ye thou no weapen haſt in thys place
Thou ſholdeſt neuer out of this grouе pace
That thou ne ſholdeſt dyen of myne honde
For I defye the ſurete and the bonde
Whiche ye thou ſayſt ye I haue made to the
What recke I of thy loue, thynke wel that loue is fre
And I wyl loue her maugre all thy myght
But for as mocke as thou arte a knyght
And wylneſt to darrayne here by batayle
Haue here my trouth, to morow I wyll nat
without weryng of armes and other wyght
That here I wyll be founden as a knyght
And bryngen harneys, right enough for the
And chuſe the beſt, and leaue the worſt for me.
And meate and drynke this nyght wyl I bring
Inough for the, and clothes for thy bedding
And yf ſo be that thou my lady wyn
And ſlee me in thys wodde ther I am in
Thou mayſt wel haue thy lady as for me.
This Palamon anſwerde: I graunt it the
And thus they ben departed ryll a morowe
whan eche of hem had laid his faith to borowe
O Cupyde out of all charyte
O regne, ye woldeſt haue no felowe with the

Full

Ful soth is sayd, that loue ne lordshyp
Wol not hys thankes haue any felyshyp
We fynde that of Arcite and of Palamon
Arcite is ryden anone into the toun
And on the morowe or it were daye lyght
Ful pryuely two harneys hath he dight
Both sufficient and mete to darreyne
The batayle in ỳ felde betweyxt hem tweine
And on hys horse, alone as he was borne
He caryeth all hys harneys hym beforne
And in the grene, at tyme and place set
This Arcite & this Palamon bene mette
To chaungen gan the colour in her face
Right as the hunter, in ỳ regne of Trace
That standeth at a gappe wyth a speare
When hunted is the lyon or the beare
And heereth hym come rushyng in the leaues
And breaketh the bowes in the greues
And thinketh, here cometh my mortal enemy
Wythout faylle, he must be dead or I
For either I moste slee hym at the gappe
Or he moste slee me, yf me myschappe
So fersen they, in chaungynge of her hewe
As farre as euerych of other mewe
There nas no good daye, ne no saluyng
But streyght, wythout worde or rehersyng
Euerych of hem holpen for to armen other
As frendly, as he were hys owne brother
And after that, wyth sharpe speares stronge
They foynen eche at other wonder longe
Thou myghtest wene, that this Palamon
In hys fyghtynge, were a wood lyon
And as a cruel Tygre was Arcyte
As wylde bores gan they fyght and smyte
That frothen whyte as foome for yre wroothe
Up to the ancle foughten they in her bloothe
And in this wyse, I let hem fyghtyng dwell
And forth I wol of Theseus you tel.
The destenye and the mynistre general
That executeth in the worlde ouer al
The purueyaunce that god hath seyn before
So strong it is, ỳ though ỳ world had sworn
The contrary of thynge be yea or naye
Yet somtyme it shall fall on a daye
That fell neuer yet in a thousande yere
For certaynly our appetytes here
Be it of warre, peace, hate, or loue
Al is ruled by the syght aboue
This meane I now by myghty Theseus
That for to hunte is so desyrous
And namely at the great harte in May
That in hys bed there daweth hym no day
That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
With hunt and horne, & houndes hym besyde
For in hys huntyng hath he such delyte
That it is all hys ioye and appetyte
To bene hym selfe the great hertes bane
For after Mars, he serueth nowe Diane
Clere was the day, as I haue told or this
And Theseus, wyth al ioye and blys
Wyth hys Ipolita, the fayre quene
And Emely, yclothed all in grene
On huntynge ben they rydden ryally
And to the groue, that stode there fast by
In which ther was an herte, as me hym told
Duke Theseus the streyght waye hath hold
And to the launde, he ryden hym ful ryght
For thider was ỳ hert wont to haue his flight
And ouer a broke, and so forth on hys way
This duke wol haue a cours at hym or tweyn
With houndes, such as hym lyst commaunde
And when ỳ duke was comen into ỳ launde
Vnder the sonne he loked, and that anon
He was ware of Arcyte and Palamon
That fought breme, as it were bulles two
The brygh swordes wenten to and fro
So hydously, that wyth the lest stroke
It semed that it wolde haue fellen an oke
But what they weren, nothynge he ne wote
This duke wh his spores his courser smote
And at a sterte he was betweyxt hem two
And pulled out hys swerde, and cryed, ho
Nomore, on payne of lesyng of your heed
By myghty Mars, he shall anone be deed
That smyteth any stroke, that I maye sene
But telleth me, what myster men ye bene
That ben so hardy for to fyghten here
Wythout iudge, or other offycere
As though it were in lystes rially.
Thys Palamon answered hastely
And sayd: syr, what nedeth wordes mo
We haue the deeth deserued both two
Two wofull wretches ben we & caytyues
That ben encombred of our owne lyues
And as thou arte a rychtfull lorde and iuge
Ne yeue vs neyther mercy ne refuge
But slee me fyrst, for seynt charite
But slee my felowe as wel as me
Or slee hym fyrst, for though thou know it lite
This is thy mortal foe, this is Arcite
That fro thy lande is banyshed on hys heed
For whych he hath deserued to be deed
For this is he, that came vnto thy yate
And sayd, that he hyght Philostrate

Thus

Thus hath he lapsed full many a yere
And thou hast made hym thy chefe squyre
And thys is he, that loueth Emely.
For sythe the day is come that I shall dye
I make playnly my confessyon
I am thyne woful Palamon
That hath thy prison broke wrongfully
I am thy mortall foe, and he am I
That loueth so hotte Emelye the bryght
That I wol dye here present in her syght
wherfore I aske dethe and my iewyse
But slee my felowe in the same wyse
For bothe we haue deserued to be slayn
This worthy duke answerde anon agayn
And sayd, this is a shorte conclusyon
your owne mouthe, by your confessyon
Hath dampned you, and I woll it recorde
It nedeth not to pyne you wyth a corde
Ye shall be deed by mygthy Mars the reed
The quene anone, for very womanhed
Gan for to wepe, and so dyd Emelye
And all the ladyes in the companye
Great pyte was it, as thought hem all
That euer suche a chaunce shulde befall
For gentylmen they were of great estate
And nothyng but for loue was thys debate
And sawe her blody woundes wyde & sore
And all cryden bothe lesse and more
Haue mercy lorde vpon vs wymmen all
And on her bare knees downe they fall
And wolde haue kyst his feet there he stode
Tyl at the last, aslaked was his mode
For pyte renneth soone in gentle herte
And though he fyrst for yre quoke & sterte
He hath consydred shortly in a clause
The trespas of hem bothe, & eke the cause
And al though hys yre bet gylt accused
Yet in hys reason he hem bothe excused
As thus: he thought well that euery man
woll helpe hym selfe in loue al that he can
And eke deliuer hym selfe out of a pryson
And eke hys herte had compassyon
Of wymmen, for they wepen euery in one
And in hys gentle herte he thought anone
And softe vnto hym selfe he sayd: fy
Vpon a lorde, that woll haue no mercy
But be a lyon, bothe in worde and dede
To hem that ben in repentaunce & in drede
As well as to a proude dispytous man
That wyll maynteyne that he fyrst began
That lorde hath wytt, that wel can discrecyon
That in suche case ys no dyffynycion
But weyeth pryde and humblesse after one
And shortly, whan hys yre was thus agone
He gan to loken vp with eyen lyght
And spake these wordes al on hyght
The god of loue, ah, benedicite
Howe mygthy, & howe great a lorde is he
Agayn hys mygth ther gayneth no obstacles
He may be clepyed a god for hys myracles
For he can maken at hys owene gyse
Of euery herte, as hym lyst deuyse
Lo here thys Arcyte, and thys Palamon
That quytely were out of my prison gon
And myght haue lyued in Thebes royally
And knowen I am her mortall enemy
And that her dethe lyth in my power also
And yet hath loue, maugre her eyen two
Brought hem hyther bothe for to dye
Nowe loketh, is not this a grete folye
Who may be a fole, but yf he loue
Beholde for goddes sake, that syttyth aboue
Se howe they blede, be they not wel arayde
Thus hath her lord, the god of loue hem payde
Her wages, and her fees for her seruyse
And yet they wenen to be full wyse
That serue loue for aught that may be fall
But yet is this the best game of all
That she, for whom they haue thys iolyte
Can hem therfore, as moche thanke as me
She woote nomore of all this hoter fare
By God, than woote a cokowe or an hare
But all moste ben alayed hote and colde
A man moste ben a fole, other yong or olde
I woote it by my selfe full yore agone
For in my tyme, a seruaunte was I one
And therfore syth I knowe of loues payne
I woote howe sore it can a man distrayne
As he that ofte hath be caught in her lace
I you forgyue all holy thys trespace
At the request of the quene, that knele[th] here
And eke of Emely, my syster dere
And ye shall bothe anon vnto me swere
That ye shal neuer more my countre dere
Ne make warre vpon me nyght ne day
But ben my frendes in all that ye may
I you forgyue thys trespas euery dele
And they hym swore hys asking fayr & wele
And him obeysshyd and al myrry prayde
And he hem graunted grace, & thus he sayde.
To speke of worthy lynage & rychesse
Though she were a quene or a princesse
Eche of you bothe is worthy doutles
To wedde whan tyme is, but nathelesse
I speke

I speake as for my syster Emely
for whom ye haue thys stryfe and ielowsy
ye wote your selfe, she maye not wedde two
At ones, though ye fyghten euer mo
But one of you, all be hym loth or lefe
He moste go pype in an yue lefe
Thys is to saye, she maye not haue both
Ne ben ye neuer so ielous, ne so wroth
And therfore, I you put in thys degre
That ethe of you shall haue hys desyre
As hym is shape, and herken in what wyse
Lo here your ende, of that I shall deuyse
My wyll is thys, for plat conclusion
Without any replicacion
yf that you lyketh, taketh it for the best
That euerych of you shall go where hym lyst
Frely, without raunsome or daungere
And thys daye fyftye weekes fulle ne mere
Euerych of you shall bringe an. C. knyghtes
Armed for the lystes vp all ryghtes
Al redy to darreyne here by batayle
And thys behote I you wythouten fayle
Upon my trouth, as I am true knyght
That whether of you both, hath that myght
That is to saye, that whether he or thou
May wyth his bodred, as I spake of now
Slee hys contrary, or out of lystes dryue
Hym shall I yeue Emely to wyue
To whom y fortune geueth so fayre a grace.
The lystes shall I maken in thys place
And god so wysely on my soule rewe
As I shal euyn iudge be and trewe
Ye shall none other ende wyth me make
That one of you shalbe ded or take
And yf ye thynken, thys is wel ysayd
Sayeth your auysyse, & holde you wel apayd
Thys is your ende, and your conclusion.
Who loketh lyghtly now but Palamon
Who spryngeth vp for ioye but Arcite
Who coude tel, or who coude endyte
The ioye that is made in thys place
When Theseus had done so fayre a grace
But doun on knees wet euery maner wight
And thanked hym, wyth al her hert & myght
And namely these Thebans manye sythe
And thus wyth good hope & herte blythe
They take her leue, & hóward gan they ryde
To Thebes warde, wyth olde walles wyde
I trowe men woulde deme it negligence
yf I forwetten to tell the dispence
Of Theseus, that goeth so busely
To maken vp the lystes royally
That suche a noble Theatre, as it was
I dare well saye, in thys worlde ther nas
The circute a myle was about
Walled wyth stone, and dyched al about
Rounde was the shape, in maner of a compas
Full of degrees, the heygth of sixty paas
That when a man was set on one degre
He letted not hys felowe for to se
Estward there stode a gate of marble whyte
Westward ryght suche another in thopposite
And shortly to conclude, suche a place
was none in erth, as in so lytle space
For in the lande, there nas no crafty man
That geometry, or arsmetyke can
Ne purtreture, ne caruer of ymages
That Theseus ne gaue hym mete & wages
The theatre for to make and deuyse
And for to do hys ryte and sacrifyce
He estwarde hath vpon the yate aboue
In worshyp of Venus, goddes of loue
Do make an auter, and an oratory
And on the weststyde, in memory
Of Mars, he hath maked such another
That cost of golde largely a fother
And northwarde, in a turret in the wal
Of alabastre whyte, and redde coral
An oratorye, ryche for to se
In worshyp of Diane, goddes of chastite
Hath Theseus do wrought in noble wyse
But yet had I forgotten to deuyse
The noble caruynges and the portratures
The shap, the countenaunce, & the fygures
That weren in the oratories thre
First in the temple of Venus thou mayst se
Wrought on the wal, ful pytously to beholde
The broken sleepes, and the sykes colde
The sault teares, and the waymentyng
The fyre strokes, and the desyrying
That loues seruauntes in thys lyfe endure
The othes, that her couenaunts assure
Pleasaunce and hope, desyre, foolehardynesse
Beauty and youth, baudry and rychesse
Charmes and sorcery, leasynges and flatery
Dyspence, busynesse, and ielousy
That wered of yelowe goldes a garlande
And a cokowe sytting on her honde
Festes, instrumentes, carolles, and daunces
Lustes and araye, and al the circumstaunces
Of loue, whych I reken and reken shal
By ordre, were paynted on the wal
And mo then I can make of mencion
For sothly all the mount of Cytheron

where

Where Venus hath her principal dwellyng
was shewed on the wall in portreyng
wyth all the ioye, and the lustynesse
Nought was forgete the portresse ydelnesse
Ne Narcisius the fayre of yore agon
Ne yet the folye of kynge Salomon
Ne yet the great strength of Hercules
Thenchauntement of Medea and Circes
Ne of Turnus, wyth his hardy fyers courage
The ryche Cresus caytyfe in seruage
Thus may ye sene, that wisdome ne richesse
Beaute ne sleyght, strength ne hardynesse
Ne may wyth Venus holde champartye
For as her lyst the worlde may she gye
Lo, al these folke so caught were in her las
Tyll they for wo full ofte sayd alas
Suffyseth here one ensample or two
And though I coude reken a thousande mo
The statue of Venus glorious to se
was maked stondynge in the large see
And fro the nauyll downe al couered was
wyth wawes grene, and bryght as any glas
A cytole in her ryght hande had she
And on her heed, ful semely for to se
A rose garlande fresshe and wel smellynge
Above her heed doues flyttrynge
Before her stode her sonne Cupido
Upon hys shoulders wynges had he two
And blynde he was, as it is ofte sene
A bowe he had, and arowes bryght and kene
why shulde I not as wel tellen al
The purgatory that was ther about ouer al
within the temple of myghty Mars the rede
Al paynted was the wal in length and in brede
Lyke to the estres of the grysly place
That hyght the gret temple of Mars in Trace
In thylke colde frosty regyon
Ther Mars hath hys souerayne mansion
First on the wall was paynted a forest
In whych ther wonneth neyther man ne best
Wyth knotty and knarry trees olde
Of stubbes sharpe, and hydous to beholde
In whych ther was a romble and a soune
As though a storme shuld bresten euery toune
And downward vnder an hyl vnder a dent
Ther stode the temple of Mars armypotent
wrought all of burnt stele, of whych thentre
was longe and streyght, and gastly for to se
And ther out came suche a rage and such a vyse
That it made all the gates for to ryse
The northren lyght in at the doores shone
For wyndowe on the wall was there none
Thrugh which men might any lyght discerne
The doores were al of adamant eterne
yclenched ouerthwarte and endelonge
wyth yren tonge, for to make it stronge
Euery pyller, the temple to susteme
was tonne great, of yren bright and scheme
Ther sawe I first the derke ymagynyng
Of felony, and eke the compassyng:
The cruel yre, redde as any glede
The pykepurse and eke the pale drede
The smyler, wyth the knyfe vnder the cloke
The shepen brennynge wyth the blacke smoke
The treason of the murdrynge in the bede
The open warre, with woundes all be bleede
Conteke with blody knyues, and sharpe manace
All full of chyrkyng was that sory place
The sleer of hym selfe yet sawe I there
His herte blood hath bathed all his here
The nayle vnder in the shode an hyght
with colde deth, wyth mouth gapyng vpright
Amyddes of the temple sate Mischaunce
with Discomfort, and sory Countenaunce
Yet sawe I woodnesse, laughynge in his rage
Armed complaynte on theft, and fyers courage
The carayne in the bushe, with throte ycorue
A thousande slayne, and not of qualme ystorue
The tyraunt with the pray by force yraft
The towne destroyed there was nothing laft
Yet sawe I brent the shyppes hoppesteres
The hunter strangled with the wylde beares
The sowe frettynge the chylde in the cradel
The coke scalded, for al his longe ladel
Nought was forgeten by infortune of Marte
The carter ouer rydden with his owne carte
Vnder the wheele full lowe he lay adown
There were also of Martes divysyon
The barbour, the bocher, and the smyth
That forgeth sharpe swordes on the stythy
And all about depaynted in a toure
Sawe I Cesarem sytting in great honoure
with the sharpe swerde ouer his heed
Hangynge by a sotyl twynned threde
Depaynted was ther, the slaughter of Julius
Of great Nero, and of Antonius
Al be that tyme they were vnborne
yet was her death depaynted there before
By menacynge of Mars, right by figure
So was it shewed in that portreture
As is depaynted in the estres aboue
Who shalde deed or ells slayne for loue
Suffyseth one ensample in stoores olde
I may not reken them al, though I wolde

The

The statue of Marte vpon a carte stode
Armed, and loked grym as he were wode
And ouer his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres, that ben cleped in scriptures
That one (Puella) hyght, ꝑ other (Rubeus)
Thys god armes was arayed thus
A wolfe there stode before hym at his fete
Wyth eyen red, and of a man he ete
wyth subtyl penyl was paynted thys storie
In redoutynge of Marte and of his glorye.
Nowe to the temple of Dyane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste
To tel you al the descripcyoun
Depaynted ben the walles vp and doun
Of huntyng and of chaunsful chastyte
There sawe I howe wofful Calistope
when that Dyane greued was wyth her
was turned fro a woman to a bere
And afterwarde was she made ꝑ lode sterre
Thus was it paynted, I can saye no ferre
Her sonne is eke a sterre, as men may se
There sawe I Dane turned vnto a tre
I meane not the goddesse Dyane
But Venus doughter, which ꝑ hight Dane
There sawe I Acteon an herte ymaked
For vengeaūce ꝑ he sawe Dyane al naked
I sawe howe ꝑ his houndes haue hym caught
And freten hym, for they knewe hym naught
Yet ypaynted was a lytel ferthermore
Howe Athalant hunted the wylde bore
And Meliager, and many other mo
For whych Dyane wrought hym care & wo
There sawe I many another wonder storye
whych me lyst not to drawe in memorye
This goddesse ful wel vp an harte she is sete
wyth smale houndes al aboute her fete
And vnderneth her fete, she had a moone
Waxyng it was, and shulde wane soone
In gaudy grene, her statue clothed was
wyth bowe in hande, and arowes in a caas
Her eyen cast she ful lowe adoun
There Pluto hath his darke regioun
A woman trauelynge was her before
But for her childe, so longe was vnbore
Ful pytously Lucyna gan she cal
And sayd help: for thou mayst best of al
Wel coude he paynte lyuelye that it wrought
Wyth many a floryn he the hewes bought

Now then these lystes made, & Theseus
That at his great cost hath arayed thus
The temples, and the theatre euerydel
When it was done, it lyked him wōder wel
But stynte I wol of Theseus a lyte
And speke of Palamon and of Arcyte
The daye approcheth of her returnynge
That euerych shulde an C knyghtes bringe
The batayle to darreyne, as I you tolde
And to Athenes, her couenaūtes to holde
Hath euerich of hem brought an C knightes
wel armed for the warre, at al ryghtes
And sykerly, there trowed many a man
That neuer sythnes the worlde began
As for to speake of knyghthode, of her honde
As farre as god hath made see or londe
Nas of so fewe, so noble a company
For euery wyght, that loued chyualry
And wolde his thākes haue a passyng name
Hath prayed, that he myght be of that game
And wel was him, that therto chosen was
For ye there fel to morowe such a caas
Ye knowe wel, that euery lusty knyght
That loueth paramours, & hath his myght
were it in Englande, or els where
They wolde fayne wryten to be there
To fyght for a lady, ah, benedicite
It were a lusty syght for to se
And ryght so fardē they wyth Palamon
wyth hym there went knyghtes many on
Some wolde ben armed in an habergeon
And in a brest plate, wyth a lyght gypon
And some wold haue a payre of plates large
And some wold haue a pryue sheld or a targe
Some wolde be armed on his legges wele
And haue an axe, & some a mace of stele
There nas none newe gyse that it nas olde
Armed were they, as I haue you tolde
Euerych after his opinion
¶ Ther mayst ꝑ se comyng wyth Palamon
Lygurge hym self, the great kinge of Trace
Blacke was his berde, & māly was his face
The sercles of his eyen in his heed
They glouden betwyxte yelowe and reed
And lyke a lyon loked he aboute
wyth kemped heeres on his browes stoute
His lymmes great, his brawnes stronge
His shoulders brode, his armes roude & lōge
And as the gyse was in his countre
Ful hye vpon a chare of golde stode he
wyth foure whyte bulles in the trays
In stede of a cote armure, ouer his hernays
wyth nayles yelowe, & bryght as any golde
He hath a beares skyn, cole blacke for olde
His lōge heare was kempt behynd his backe

As any rauens fether it shone for blacke
A wreth of gold arme greate, of huge weight
Upon his heed, set ful of stones bryght
Of fyne rubyes and of dyamandes
About his chefe ther weren wyse tlaundes
Twenty and mo, as great as any stree
To hunten at the lyon, or at the wilde bere
And folowed hym, wyth mosel fast ybounde
Colers of golde, and torettes fyled rounde
An hundred lordes had he in his route
Armed ful wel, with hertes sterne and stoute

Wyth Arcite, in storyes as men fynde
The great Emetrius, the kynge of ynde
Upon a stede bay, trapped in stele
Couered wyth a cloth of golde diapred wele
Came rydyng lyke the god of armes Marte
His cote armure was of cloth of Tarte
Couched wyth perle, whyte, rounde & grete
His sadel was of brent golde newe ybete
A mantel upon his shoulders hangyng
Bret full of rubyes, red as fyre sparklyng
His crysp heere lyke rynges was ronne
And that was yelowe, & glyteryng as the Sonne
His nose was hye, his eyen bryght citryn
His lyppes rudy, his colour was sanguyn
A fewe freckles in his face ysprenkle
Betwene yelowe, & somdele blacke ymeynte
And as a lyon he his eyen caste
Of fyue and twenty yere his age I geste
His berde was wel begonne for to spredge
His voyce was as a trompet sownynge
Upon his heed he wered of laurer grene
A garlande fresshe and lusty for to sene
Upon his hande he bare for his delyte
An Egle tame, as any lylly whyte
An hundred lordes had he with hym there
Al armed saue her heedes in her gere
Ful richely in al maner thynges
For trusteth wel, that erles, dukes, & kynges
Were gathered in this noble companye
For loue, and for encreace of chyualrye
About this kinge there ran on euery parte
Ful many a tame lyon and lyberte
And in this wyse, these lordes al & some
Ben on the sonday to the cyte come
Aboute prime, and in the towne alyght.
This Theseus, this duke this worthy knyght
When he had brought hem into his cyte
And inned hem, euerych after his degre
He festeth hem, and doth so great labour
To easen hem, and done hem al honour
That yet men weenen that no mans wyt
Of none estate couthe amende it
The mynstralcye, the seruyce at the feest
The great gyftes, to the moste and leest
The rich array, throughout Theseus paleys
Ne who sat fyrst ne last upon the deys
What ladyes fayrest ben or best daunsyng
Or which of hem can best daunce or synge
Ne who moste feleth of loue his payne
Ne what hawkes syten on perchen abroue
Ne what houndes lyggen on the floure adoun
Of al this now make I no mencion
But al the effecte, that thynketh me the best
Now comyth the point, herkeneth if you lest

The sonday at nyght, or day bygan to spryng
When Palamon the larke herde synge
Although it were not day by houres two
Yet sange the larke, & Palamon ryght tho
With holy herte and with an hye corage
He rose to wenden on his pylgrymage
Unto the blysful Cytherea benygne
I meane Venus honorable and bygne
And in her hour, he walketh forthe a pas
Unto the lystes, there the temple was
And downe he kneleth, & with humble chere
And herte sore, he sayd as ye shal here
Fayrest of fayre: O lady myne Venus
Doughter of Ioue, and spouse to Vulcanus
Thou glader of the mount of Cytheron
For thylke loue thou haddest to Adon
Haue pyte of my bytter teares smerte
And take my humble prayer at thyne herte
Alas, I ne haue no langage to tell
The effecte, ne the tormentes of myne hel
Myne herte may not myne harmes bewraye
I am so confused, that I can not saye
But mercy lady bryght, that wost wele
My thought, & seest what harmes that I fele
Consyder al this, and rue vpon my sore
As wysly as I shal for euermore
Enforth my myght, thy true seruaunt be
And holde warre alwaye wyth chastite
That make I myne auowe, so ye me helpe
I kepe not of armes for to yelpe
Ne I ne aske to mowe to haue victory
Ne renome in this caas, ne veyne glory
Of pryse of armes, to blowen up & doun
But wolde haue fully possessyoun
Of Emely, and dye in her seruyce
Fynde thou the manere how, & in what wyse
I recche not, but it may better be

To haue victory of hem, or they of me
So that I haue my lady in myn armes
For though so be that Mars is god of armes
Your vertue is so great in Heuen aboue
That yf you lyst, I shall wel haue my loue
Thy temple shal I worshyp euer mo
And on thyn auter, where I ryde or go
I wol don sacrifyce, and fyres bete
And yf ye wol not so, my lady swete
Than pray I you, to morowe with a spere
That Arcyte me throughe the herte bere
Than recke I not, whan I haue lost my lyfe
Thoughe Arcyte wynne her to wyfe
Thys is the effecte and ende of my prayere
Yeue me my lady, thou blysful lady dere

whan the orison was done of Palamon
His sacrifyce he dyd, and that anon
Ful pytously, with al circumstaunces
All tel I nat as nowe hys obseruaunces.
But at the laste, the statue of Venus shoke
And made a syngne, whereby that he toke
That hys prayere accepted was that day
For though the syngne shewed a delay
Yet wist he wel, that graunted was his bone
And with glad hert he went him hom ful sone

The thyrde houre in equal that Palamon
Began to Venus temple for to gon
Up rose the sonne, and up rose Emelye
And vnto the temple of Dyane gan hye
Her maydens, the whiche thyder were lad
Ful redely with hem the fyre they had
The ensence, the clothes, & the remenaunt al
That to the sacrifyce longen shall
The hornes ful of meethe, as was the gyse
There lacked nought to don her sacrifyce
Smokyng the temple, ful of clothes fayre
This Emely, with herte debonayre
Her body wysshe, with water of a wel
But how she dyd nyght I dare nat tel
But it be any thyng in generall
And yet it were a game to here it all
To him that meaneth wel, it were no charge
But it is good a man be at his large
Her bright heare was vnkept & vntressed all
A crowne of a grene oke reserryall
Upon her herd set ful fayre and mete
Two fyres on the auter gan she bete
And dyd her rytynges, as men may beholde
In Stace of Thebes, and these bookes olde
whan kendled was the fyre, with pitous chere
Unto Dyane she spake as ye may here

O chaste goddesse of the woddes grene
To whom both heuen & erthe and see is sene
Quene of the reygne of pluto, derke & lowe
Goddesse of maydes, ỹ myn hert hath know
Ful many a yere, and woste what I desyre
As kepe me fro the vengeaunce of thyn yre
That Acteon aboughte cruelly
Chaste goddesse, wel woste thou that I
Desyre to ben a mayde al my lyfe
Ne neuer wol I be loue ne wyfe
I am thou woste wel of thy company
A mayde, and loue huntyng and venery
And for to walken in the wodde wylde
And not for to ben a wyfe, & ben with chylde
Nought wyl I knowe compayne of man
Nowe helpe me lady sythe ye may and can
For the thre formes that thou haste in the
And Palamon, that hath suche a loue to me
And eke Arcyte, that loueth me so sore
This grace I pray the, withouten more
As sende loue and peace betwene hem two
And fro me turne away her hertes so
That al her hote loue, and her desyre
And al her busy turment, and al her yre
Be queynt, or turned in an other place
And if so be thou wolte not do me that grace
Or yf so be my destenye be shapen so
That I shal nedes haue one of hem two
As sende me hym that most desyreth me.
Beholde goddesse of clene chastyte
The bytter teares, that on my chekes fal
Syn thou arte a mayde, and keper of vs all
My maydenhede thou kepe, and wel conserue
And whyle I lyue a mayden wol I ỹ serue.
The fyres brenne vpon the auter clere
Whyle Emely was thus in her prayere
But sodenly she sawe a thyng queynte
For ryght anon, one of the fyres queynte
And quyckede agayn, and after that anon
That other fyre was queynte, and al agon
And as it queynte it made a whystlyng
As don these wete brondes in her brennyng
And at the brondes ende, out ran anone
As it were bloddy droppes many one
For whiche so sore agaste was Emelye
That she was wel nyre madde, & gan to crye
For she ne wyste what it sygnyfyed
But onely for the feare thus she cryed
And wepte, that it was pyte for to here
And therwithal Dyane gan to apere
With bowe in honde, right as an hunteresse
And sayd doughter, stynte thyn heuynesse

Amonge the goddes hye it is alkymed
And by eterne wrytten & conkymed
Thou shalt be wedded to one of tho
That haue for the so much care and wo
But vnto wheth of hem I may not tel
Farewel, for I may no lenger dwel
The fyres, whych on myne auter brenne
Shal declaren, er that thou gon henne
Thys auenture of loue, as in thys caste
And with þ worde, the arowes in the caste
Of the goddes, clatteren fast and ringe
And forth she went, and made vanyshynge
For whych thys Emely astonyed was
And sayde: what mounteth thys, alas
I put me vnder thy protection
Dyane, and vnder thy dyspocyion
And home she goth the nerr waye
This is the effect, there is nomore to saye.
The nerte houre of Mars folowyng this
Arcite vnto the temple walked is
On fyers Mars, to done hys sacrifyse
Wyth al the myght of hys paynem wyse
Wyth pytous herte, and hye deuocion
Right thus to Mars he sayd hys oryson
O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
Of trace honoured arte, and lorde wholde
And hast in euery regne and euery lande
Of armes, al the bridle in thyne hande
And hem fortunest, as thy lyst deuyse
Accepte of me my pytous sacrifyce
yf so be my thought may deserue
And that my myght be worthy for to serue
Thy godhede, that I maye ben one of thyne
Then praye I the, that thou rue on my pyne
For thylke payne, and thylke hote fyre
In whych thou brentest whylom for desyre
when thou vsedest the fayre beaute
Of fayre yonge freshe Venus fre
And haddest her in thyne armes, at thy wyll
Al though thou ones on a tyme myslyst
when Vulcanus had caught the in hys lasse
And foumde thy lyggynge by hys wyfe alas
For thylke sorowe, that was in thyne herte
Haue ruth as wel on my paynes smerte
I am yonge and vnconning, as thou wost
And as I trowe, wyth loue offended most
That euer was any lyues creature
For she that doth me al thys wo endure
Ne recheth neuer, where I synke or flete
And wel I wote, or she me mercy hete
I moste wyth strength wyn her in thys place
And wel I wote, wythout helpe or grace
Of the, ne may my strength not auayle
The helpe me lorde to morowe in my batayle
For thylke fyre, that whylom brent the
As wel as the fyre nowe brenneth me
And do, that I to morowe haue victorye
Myn be the trauayle, and thyn be the glorye
Thy soueraygne temple wol I moste honouren
Of any place, and alwaye most labouren
In thy plesaunce, and in thy craftes stronge
And in thy temple, I wol my baner honge
And al the armes of my compaye
And euermore, vntyl the daye I dye
Eterne fyre I wol before the fynde
And eke to thys auowe I wyl me bynde
My berd, my herte, þ hongeth lowe adoun
That neuer yet felte offensioun
Of rasour ne of shere, I wol the yeue
And bene thy true seruaunt whyle I lyue
Now lorde haue ruth vpon my sorowes sore
Yeue me the victory, I aske the nomore
The prayer stynte of Arcite the stronge
The ringes on the temple dore they ronge
And eke the doores clatteren ful faste
Of whych Arcite somwhat him agaste.

The fyres brennen vpon the auter bryght
That it gan al the temple lyght
A swete smel anone the grounde vp pase
And Arcite anone hys honde vp hafe
And more ensence into the fyre he caste
With other rytes mo, and at the laste
The statue of Mars bega his hauberk ringe
And with that sounde he herde a murmuringe
Ful lowe and dym, that sayd thus: victory
For which he yaue to Mars honour & glory
And thus with ioye, and hope wel to fare
Arcite anone vnto hys inne is fare
As fayne as foule is of the bryght sonne
And right anone such a stryfe is begonne
For thylke graunting, in the heuen aboue
Betwyxt Venus, the goddes of loue
And Mars the sterne god armypotente
That Jupiter was busy it to stynte
Tyl that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knewe so many auentures olde
Founde in hys experience and arte
That he ful sone hath pleased euery parte
And soth is sayd, elde hath great auauntage
In elde is both wysedome and vsage
Men maye the olde out renne, but not out rede
Saturne anone, to stynte stryfe and drede
Al be it that it be agayne hys kynde

Of

Of al thys stryffe he can remedy fynde
Wy dere doughter Venus, q Saturne
Wy course that hath so wyde for to turne
Hath more power then wote any man
Wyn is the drenchynge in the see so wan
Wyne is the prison in the derke cote
Wyn is ꝑ stragling & ꝑ hagyng by ꝑ throte
The murmure, and the churles rebellyng
The groynyng, and the pryuy empoysonyng
I do vengeaunce and playne correction
whyle I dwell in the sygne of the lyon
Wyne is the ruyne of the hye halles
The fallyng of the toures and of the walles
Upon the mynor, or vpon the carpenters
I slewe Sampson shakyng the pylers
And myne ben the maladyes colde
The derke treasons, and the castels olde
Wy lokynge is the father of pestilence
Now wepe nomore, I shal do my diligence
That Palamon, that is thyne owne knyght
Shal haue hys lady, as thou hym behyght
Thogh Mars shal helpe his knyst natheles
Betwixt you it moste sometyme be pees
Al be ye not of one complection
That causeth al days such dyuision
I am thyne ayle, redy at thy wyl
Wepe nomore, I wol thy lust fulfyl
Now wol I stynte of these goddes aboue
Of Mars, and of Venus goddes of loue
And playnly I wol tellen you as I can
The great effecte, of whych that I began.

Great was ꝑ feest in Athenes that day
And eke that lusty seson in May
Made euery wyght to ben in such pleasaunce
That al that day lusten they and daunce
And spenten it in Venus hye seruyce
But because that they shulden aryse
Erly for to se the great fyght
Unto her rest went they at nyght
And on the morowe when day gan spryngе
Of horse & harneys, noyse and claterynge
There was in the hostelryes al aboute
And to the palays rode there many a route
Of lordes, vpon stedes and palfreys
There mayst thou se deuysyng of harneys
So vncouth, so ryche, & wrought so wele
Of goldsmythry, of broudry, and of stele
The shyldes bryght testeres and trappers
Gold hewe helmes, hauberkes & cote armers
Lordes in paramentes, on her coursers
Knyghtes of retenue, and eke squyers
Naylynge the speares, and helmes bokelyng
Gyggyng of shyldes with layneres lacynge
There as nede is, they were nothynge ydel
The fomynge stedes on the golden bydel
Gnawyng, and fast the armurers also
wyth fyle and hammer, rydyng to and fro
Ynen on foote, and comunes many one
Wyth shorte staues, thycke as they may gone
Pypes, trompes, nakoners, and clarions
That in the batayle blowen blody sownes
The palays ful of people vp and down
Here thre, there ten, holdynge her question
Deuynyng of these Theban knyghtes two
Some sayd thus, some sayd it shulde be so
Some helde wyth hym with ꝑ blacke berde
Some wyth the balled, some wyth the thick herde
Some sayd he loked grym, and wold fyght
He hath a sparth of twenty poude of wyght
Thus was the hal ful of deuynynge
Longe after the sonne gan to spryngе
The great Theseus of hys slepe gan wake
wyth mynstralsye & noyse that they make
Helde yet the chambre of hys palays ryche
Tyl that the Theban knyghtes, both yliche
Honoured weren, and into the place ylette.
¶ Duke Theseus is at the wyndowe sette
Arayed ryght as he were a god in trone
The people preased thyderwarde ful sone
Hym for to sene, and done hym hye reuerence
And eke for to here hys hest and hys sentence
An heraude on a scaffolde made an oo
Tyl al the noyse of the people was ydo
And when he sawe the people of noyse styl
Thus shewed he the myghty dukes wyl.

¶ The lorde hath of hys hye discrecion
Consydred, that it were destruccion
To gentle bloode, to fyghten in thys gyse
Of mortal batayle, now in thys empryse
Wherfore to shapen, that they shal not dye
He wol hys fyrst purpose modefye
No man therfore, vp payne of losse of lyfe
No maner shotte, polaxe, ne shorte knyfe
In to the lystes sende, or thrytherbrynge
Ne short sword to stycke with point bytynge
No man ne drawe, ne bere it by hys syde
Ne no man shal to hys felow ryde
But one course, wyth a sharp grouden spere
Foyne yf hym lyst on foote, hym selfe to were
And he that is at mischefe, shall e take
And not slayne but brought to the stake
That shall bene ordeyned on eyther syde
But thyther he shal by force, and there abyde
And yf so fal, that the chieftayne be take

On eyther syde, or elis scarce hys make
No lenger shal the turnament laste
God spede you, goeth and layeth on faste
with swordes & lõge maces fyghte your fyl
Goth now your waye, this is the lordes wyl
¶ The voyce of the people touched heuen
So loude cryed they with mery steuen
God saue suche a lorde, that is so good
He wylleth no destruction of blood.
Up goeth the trompes and the melodye
And to the lystes, rydeth so the companye
By ordynaunce, throughout the cytie large
Hõged with cloth of golde, & not with sarge
Ful lyke a lorde thys noble duke gan ryde
These two Thebans on euery syde
And after rode the quene and Emelye
And after that an other companye
Of one and other, after her degre
And thus they passen throughout the cytie
And to the lystes comen they be by tyme
It nas not of the daye yet fully pryme
when set was Theseus full ryche and hye
Ipolita the quene, and Emelye
And other ladyes in degrees aboute
Unto the seates preaseth al the route
And westward, thrugh ꝑ gates vnder marte
Arcite and eke an hundred of hys parte
with baner reed, is entred ryght anon
And in the selue momet entred ꝑalamon
Is, vnder Venus, estwarde in that place
with baner whyte, & hardy chere & face
And in al the worlde, to seken vp and doun
So euen without variacion
There nas such companyes twey
For there nas none so wyse that coude sey
That any had of other auauntage
Of worthynesse, ne of estate, ne age
So euen were they chose to gesse
And in to the lystes rayse they hem dresse
when that her names red were euerychone
That in her nombre, gyle were there none
Tho were the gates shyt, & cryed was loude
Do now your deuer yonge knightes proude
¶ The herauldes left her prycking vp & doun
Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun
There is no more to saye, este and weste
In goth the sharpe speres sadly in the arrest
In goth the sharpe spurres into the syde
There se men who can iust, & who can ryde
There shyuereth shaftes, vpon shyldes thycke
He feleth through the herte spoune the pryck
Thy stynketh ꝑ speres, stronge sete on hyght
Out goth the swordes, as the syluer bryght
The helmes they to hewe, and to shrede
Out burst ꝑ blood, with sterne stremes rede
with mighty maces, the bones they to breke
He through ꝑ thyckest of ꝑ thrõge gan threke
Ther stomblen stedes stronge, & doun go on al
He rolled vnder the foote as doth a bal
He foyneth on hys fete with a tronchoun
And he hurteth with hys horse adoun
He through the body is hurte, and syth ytake
Maugre hys heed, & brought vnto the stake
As forward was, ryght there he must abyde
An other is ladde on that other syde
And sometyme doth hem Theseus to reste
Hem to refreshe, and drynke yf hem leste
Ful ofte a day haue these Thebans two
Togyther met, and done eche other wo
Unhorsed hath eche other of hem twey
Ther was no tygre in the vale of Galaphey
when her whelpe is stole, when it is lyte
So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite
For ielous herte, vpon thys ꝑalamon
Ne in Belmary, there is no lyon
That hunted is, or for hys honger woode
Ne of hys pray, desyreth so the bloode
As ꝑalamon to slee hys foe Arcite
The ielouse strokes on her helmes byte
Out renneth ꝑ bloode on both her sydes rede
Sometyme an ende there is of euery dede
For er the sunne vnto the rest wente
The stronge kynge Emetrius gan hente
Thys ꝑalamon, as he fought vp this Arcite
And made hys swerde depe in hys flesh byte
And by force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and drawen to the stake
And in the rescous of thys ꝑalamon
The stronge kynge Lygurge is borne adoun
And kynge Emetrius, for al hys strength
Is borne out of hys sadle a swerdes length
So hurte hym ꝑalamon or he were take
But al for nought, he was brought to ꝑ stake
Hys hardy herte myght hym helpe naught
He must abyde, when that he was caught
By force, and eke by composycion
Who sorroweth now but woful ꝑalamon
That mote no more gon agayne to fyght
¶ And when that Theseus had sene ꝑ fyght
He cryed hoe: no more, for it is don
Ne none shal lenger to hys felowe gon
I wol be true iuge, and not partye
Arcite of Thebes shal haue Emelye
That by hys fortune hath her fayre ywonne

Anone

Anon there is a noyse of people bygonne
For iope of thys, so loude and hye withall
It semed that the lystes shulde fall
What can nowe sayre Venus done aboue?
What sayth she now? what doth ꝑ quene of loue
But wepeth so, for wantyng of her wil
Tyl that her teares on the lystes fyll
And she sayd: I am a shamed doutles
Saturne sayd: doughter holde thy pees
Mars hath al his wil his knyght hath his bone
And by myn heed, thou shalt be eased sone
The trompes with the loude mynstralcye
The heraudes, that so loude yel and crye
Ben in her wele, for ioye of dan Arcyte
But herkeneth me, & stynteth noyse a lyte
Whyche a myracle there befell anon
This fyers Arcyte had hys helme of doon
And on a courser for to shewe hys face
He pricketh endlonge the large place
Lokyng vpwarde vpon Emelye
And she ayen hym caste a frendly eye
(For women, as to speke in comune
They folowen al the fauour of fortune)
And was all hys chere as in hys herte
Out of the grounde a fyre infernal sterte
From Pluto sent, at the request of Saturne
For whyche his horse for feare gan to turne
And lepe a syde, and foundred as he lepe
And er that Arcyte may taken kepe
He pyght hym on the pomel of hys heed
That in the place he lay, as he were deed
Hys brest to brosten with his sadel bowe
As blacke he lay as any cole or crowe
So was the bloode ronne in his face
Anon he was brought out of the place
With herte sore, to Theseus paleys
Tho was he corven out of hys harneys
And in a bedde ybrought ful fayre and blyue
For he was yet in memorye, and on lyue
And alway crying after Emelye.
Duke Theseus, with al hys compayne
Is comen home to Athenes hys cyte
With al blysse and greate solempnyte
Al be it that this auenture was fall
He wolde not discomforte hem all
Ayen sayd he, that Arcyte shulde not dye
He shulde ben heled of hys maladye
And of an other thyng they were as fayne
That of hem al there was none slayne
Al were they sore hurte, and namely one
That with a spere was thorled hys brest bone
Two other woundes, & two broken armes
Some had salues, and some had charmes
Fermacies of herbes and eke save
They dronken for they wold her lyues haue
For whyche this noble duke, as he wel can
Comforteth and honoureth euery man
And made reuel al the longe nyght
Vnto the straunge lordes, as it was ryght
Ne there nas holde no discomforting
But as iustes or a tourneying
For sothly there nas no discomfyture
For falling is not but an auenture
Ne to be lad by force vnto a stake
Vnyolden and with twenty knyghtes take
One person alone withouten any mo
And harved forth by arme, foote, and too
And eke hys stede dryuen forthe with staues
With footemen, bothe yemen and knaues
It was areysed hym no vilanye
There may no man clepe it cowardye
For whyche anon, duke Theseus hyght crye
To stynten al rancour and enuye
They grete as wel of one syde as of other
And eyther syde yaue, as others brother
And yaue hym gyftes after her degre
And fully helde a feest dayes thre
And conueyed the knyghtes worthyly
Out of hys towne a dayes iourney largely
And home went euery man the ryght way
There was no more, but farwel & haue good day.

Of this batayle, I wol no more endyte
But speke of Palamon and Arcyte
Swelleth the brest of Arcyte and the sore
Encreaseth at his herte more and more
The clotered bloode for any leche craft
Corrumped, and is in hys body laft
That neyther veyne bloode, ne ventousyng
Ne drynke of herbes, may be helpyng
By vertue expulsed, or anymail
For ryghte vertue cleaped natural
Ne may the venym vorde, ne expell
The pypes of hys longes began to swell
And euery lacerte in hys brest adown
Is shent with venym and corruption
Hym gayneth neyther for to get hys lyfe
Vomyte vpwarde, ne downwarde laxatyfe
All is to bruste ryghte ryght vpon
Nature hath no domynacyon
And certainly there as nature wyl nat wyrche
Farwel physyke, go beare the corse to chyrche
Thys is al & some, that Arcyte muste dye
For whyche he sendeth after Emelye

And Palamon hys cosyn dere
Than sayd he thus, as ye shall after here.
Nought may my woful spyrit in my herte
Declare a poyntē of al my sorowes smerte
To you my lady, that I love moste
But I bequethe the servyce of my goste
To you aboven any creature
Syn that my lyfe may no lenger dure
Alas the wo, alas my paynes stronge
That I for you have suffred and so longe
Alas the dethe, alas myn Emely
Alas the partyng of our company
Alas myn hertes quene, alas my lyves wyfe
Myn hertes lady, ender of my lyfe
What is the worlde, what axen mē to have
Nowe with his love, now in his colde grave
Alone withouten any company
Farwel my swete foe, myn Emely
And softe take me in your armes twey
For the love of god, herkeneth what I sey.
I have here with my cosyn Palamon
Had strife and rancour, many a day agon
For love of you, and for my jelousye
And Jupiter so wysely my soule gye
To speken of a servaunt properly
With circumstances al trewly
That is to say, trouth, honour, knyghthede
Wysedom, humblesse, estate, and hye kynrede
Fredom, and all that longeth to that arte
So Jupiter have of my soule parte
As in this worlde ryght now knowe I non
So worthy to be loved as Palamon
That serveth you, and wol don all hys lyfe
And yf that ye shall ever ben a wyfe
Forget not Palamon, the gentyl man
And with that worde his speche fayle begā
For from hys fete unto hys brest was come
The colde of dethe, that had hym nome
And yet more over, for in hys armes two
The vytal strength is lost, and al ago
Save onely the intellecte, without more
That dwelled in his herte sycke and sore
Gan faylen, whan the herte felte dethe
Dusked hys eyen two, and fayled brethe
But on hys lady, yet caste he hys eye
Hys laste worde was, mercy Emelye
Hys spyrit chaunged, and out went there
Whytherwarde I can not tel, ne where
Therfore I stynte, I am no dyvynystre
Of soules fynde I not in this regystre
Ne me lyst not thylke opinyon to tell
Of hem, though thepwriten wher they dwell
Arcyte is colde, that Mars hys soule gye
Nowe wol I speke forthe of Emelye.
Shright Emely, and howlen Palamon
And Theseus his sustre up toke anon
Swouning, & bare her fro hys corse away
What helpeth it to tarry forthe the day
To tellen how she wept bothe eve & morowe
For in suche case women have suche sorowe
Whan that her husbondes ben fro hem go
That for the more parte they sorowen so
Or elis fallen in suche maladye
That at the laste, certaynly they dye
Infinyte ben the sorowes and the teres
Of olde folke, and folke of tender yeres
In al the towne, for dethe of this Theban
For hym there wepeth bothe child and mā
So great wepyng was there not certayne
Whan Hector was brought, al fresshe islayn
To Troy alas, the pyte that was there
Crateching of chekes, rentyng eke of here
Why woldest thou be dead, thus women crye
And haddest golde ynoughe, and Emelye
No man myght glade Theseus
Saving hys olde fader Egeus
That knewe thys worldes transmutacion
As he had sene it, bothe up and doun
Jove after wo, and wo after gladnesse
And shewed hym ensamples and lykenesse
Ryght as there dyed never man, quod he
That he ne lyved in erthe in some degre
Ryght so there lyved never man, he sayde
In al thys world, that somtyme he ne deyde
Thys world is but a thorowfare full of wo
And we ben pylgrymes, passyng to and fro
Deth is an ende of every worldes sore.
And over al thys yet sayd he moch more
To thys effecte, ful wysely to enhorte
The people, that they shulde hem recomforte
Duke Theseus with al hys busy cure
Casteth nowe, where that the sepulture
Of good Arcyte, shall best ymaked be
And eke moste honorable of degre
And at the laste he toke conclusyon
That there as Arcyte and Palamon
Had for love, the batayle hem betwene
That in the same selve grove, swete & grene
There as he had his amorous desyres
Hys complaynte, & for love hys hote fyres
He wolde make a fyre, in whyche the offys
Funeral he myght hem al accomplys
And hath anon comaunded to hacke and hewe
The okes olde, and lay hem al on arewe

And

In cultpons, wel arayed for to brenne
His officers with swyfte foote they renne
And right anon at hys commaundement
And after Theseus hath sente
After a beere, and it all ouer spradde
Wyth clothe of golde, the rychest that he had
And of the same sute he clothed Arcyte
Upon hys handes hys gloues whyte
Eke on hys heed a crowne of laurer grene
And in his hande a swerde ful bright & kene
He loyde hym bare the vilage on the bere
Therwith he wepte, that pyte was to here
And for the people shulde sene hym all
Whan it was day, he brought hym to ꝑ hall
That roreth of the cry & of the sorowes soun
Tho gan this wofull theban Palamon
with glyttering berde, & ruddy shynyng herys
In clothes blacke, dropped al wyth teres
And passyng other of weppyng Emely
The rufullest of all the company.
And in as moche as the seruyce shulde be
The more noble, and ryche in hys degre
Duke Theseus let forthe the stedes bryng
That trapped were in stele all glyttering
And couered with the armes of dan Arcyte
Upon these stedes great and whyte
Ther saten folke, of which one bare his sheld
Another hys speare, in hys hande held
The thyrde bare with him a bowe turkes
Of bryent golde was the case & eke the harnes
And ryden forthe a pace with sory chere
Towarde the grove, as ye shal after here.
¶ The noblest of the grekes, that there were
Upon her shuldres caryed the bere
With slacke pace, and eyen reed and wete
Throughout the cyte, by the mayster strete
That sprad was al wo blak, & that wode hye
Right of the same is the strete ywrye
Upon the ryght hande wente Egeus
And on the other syde duke Theseus
With bessis in her hande, of golde full fyne
Al ful of hony, myike, bloode, and wyne
Eke Palamon, with full great company
And after that, came wofull Emely
With fyre in hande, as was ꝑ tyme the gyse
To don the office of funeral seruyse
Hye labour, and ful great apparayling
Was at seruyce, and at fyre makyng
That with his grene toppe the heuē raught
And twenty fadome of brede armes straught
This is to sayn, the bowes were so brode
Of strawe first ther was layde many a lode.
But how the fyre was maked vp on heighte
And eke the names, howe the trees heyght
As oke, firre, beche, aspe, elder, elme, popelere
Wyllo, holm, plane, bore, chesteyn, laurere
Maple, thorne, beche, ewe, hasel, whipultre
How they were felde, shal nat be tolde for me
Ne howe the goddes ronne vp and doun
Disheryted of her habytacioun
In whiche they wonned in rest and pees
Nymphes, Faury, and amadriades
Ne howe the beeste, ne the bryddes all
Fledden for feare, whan the trees fall
Ne how the grounde agast was of the lyght
That was nat wonte to se the sonne bryght
Ne how the fyre was couched first with stre
And than with dry stykes clouen a tre
And than with grene wodde, and spicery
And than with clothe of golde and perry
And garlondes hangyng with many a flowre
The myrre, the ensence, with swete odoure
Ne howe Arcyte lay amonge al this
Ne what rychesse about hys body is
Ne howe that Emely, as was the gyse
Put in the fyre of funeral seruyse
Ne how she swouned whā maked was ꝑ fyre
Ne what she spake, ne what was her desyre
Ne what iewelles men in the fyre caste
Whan that the fyre was great & brent faste
Ne how some cast her sheld, & some her spere
And of her vestementes, whiche ꝑ they were
And cuppes full of wyne, mylke, and bloode
In to the fyre, that brent as it were woode
Ne howe the grekes with a huge route
Thryse rydden all the fyre aboute
Upō the lefte hande, with a loude showtyng
And thryse with her speares clatering
And thryse howe the ladyes gan cry
Ne how that ladde was homwarde Emelye
Ne howe that Arcite is brent to aschen colde
Ne howe the lyche wake was holde
All that nyght, ne howe the grekes play
The wake playes, kepe I nat to say
Who wrestled best naked, wyth oyle anoynt
Ne who bare hym best in euery poynt
I woll not tellen howe they gone
Whom to Athenes, whan the play is done
But shortly to the poynt than woll I wende
And make of my longe tale an ende.

By processe and by length of yeres
All stynten is the mournyng and the teres
Of grekes, by one generall assent

Then

Than semed me there was a parlement
At Athenes, vpon a certayne poynt and cause
Amonge the whiche poyntes ypoken was
To hate with certayne countres alyaunce
And haue of Thebans fully obeysaunce
For whiche thys noble Theseus anon
Let sende after thys gentyl Palamon
Unwyste of him what was ꝑ cause & why:
But in his blacke clothes sorowfully
He came at hys commaundement on hye
Tho sent Theseus after Emelye.
Whan they were set, & hushte was ꝑ place
And Theseus abydden hath a space
Or any worde came from his wyse brest
Hys eyen sette he there hym lest
And with suche a sadde ysage, he syked styll
And after that, right thus he sayd hys wyll.
¶ The fyrst mouer of the cause aboue
Whan he first made the fayre chayne of loue
Great was the effecte, & hye was hys entente
Wel wyste he why, & what therof he mente
For with that fayre chayne of loue he bonde
The fyre, the eyre, the water, and the londe
In certayne bondes, that they may nat flie
That same prince and that mouer, ꝙ he
Hath stablished i this wretched worlde adoun
Certen dayes and duracion
To al that are engendred in thys place
Ouer the whiche day they may not pace
Al mowe they yet the dayes abredge
There nedeth none auctoure to ledge
For it is proued by experyence
But that me lyst declaren my sentence
Than may men by thys ordre discerne
That thylke mouer stable is and eterne
Wel may men knowe, but he be a fole
That euery party is deryued from hys hole
For nature hath not taken hys begynnyng
Of one parte or cauteil of a thyng
But of a thyng that perfyte is and stable
Dyscendyng so, tyl it be corrumpable
And therfore of hys wyse purueyaunce
He hath so wel byset hys ordynaunce
That spaces of thynges and progressyons
Shullen endure by successyons
And not eterne, wythout any lye
Thus mayst thou vnderstande and se at eye.
Lo the oke, that hath so longe a norisshyng
Fro the tyme that it begonnen first to spryng
And hath so longe a lyfe, as ye may se
Yet at the last, wasted is the tre
Consyderyth eke, how that the harde stone
Under our fete, on whiche we treade & gone
Yet wasteth it, as it lyeth in the wey
The brode ryuer somtyme wexeth drey
The great townes, se we wane and wende
Than ye se that al thys thyng hath ende
And man and woman se that we also
That nedeth in one of the termes two
That is to sayne, in youthe or els in age
He mote be deed, a kyng as wel as a page
Some in his bedde, some in the depe se
Some in the large felde, as ye may se
It helpeth not, al gothe that ylke wey
Than may ye se that al thyng mote dey
What maketh this, but Jupiter the kyng
That is prince and cause of al thyng
Conuertyng al to hys propre wyl
From whiche it is deryued sothe to tel
And here agayne, no creature on lyue
Of no degre, auayleth for to stryue
Than is it wysedome, as thynketh me
To make vertue of necessyte
And take it wel, that we may not eschewe
And namely that to vs al is dewe
And who so grutcheth ought, he dothe folye
And rebel is to hym that al may gye
And certaynly, a man hath moste honour
To dyen in hys excellence and flour
Whan he is ycler of hys good name
Than hath he don his frendes ne hym no shame
And gladder ought his frendes be of his deth
Whan with honour yolde is vp the breth
Than whan his name apalled is for age
For al forgeten is his vassellage:
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame
To dyen, whan he is best of name
The contrarye of al thys is wylfulnesse
Why grutchen we: why haue we heuynesse
That good Arcite, of chyualry the floure
Departed is, with duetye and with honoure
Out of this foule prison, of thys lyfe
Why grutchen here his cosyn and hys wyfe
Of his welfare, that loueth hym so wele:
Can he hem thanke: nay god wot neuer a dele
That bothe his soule, and eke hem offende
And yet they mowe not her lustes amende.
¶ What may conclude of thys longe story
But after sorowe, I rede vs be mery
And thanke Jupiter of al his grace
And er we departen from thys place
I rede we maken of sorowes two
One perfyt ioye, lastyng euer mo
And loke nowe where most sorowe is here
Therr

There wol I fyrst amende and begyn.
Hoster quod he, thys is myne ful assent
Wyth al the people of my parlement
That gentil Palamon, youre owne knyght
That seruyth you with wyl, herte, & myght
And euer hath done, sythe ye fyrst hym knewe
That ye shal of your grace upon hym rewe
And take hym for husbonde and for lorde
Lene me your honde, for thys is our accorde.
Let se nowe of your womanly pyte
He is a kynges brother sonne parde
And though he were a poore bachelere
Syn he hath serued you so many a yere
And had for you so great aduersyte
It muste ben considered, leueth me
For gentile mercy ought to passen ryght.
Than sayd he thus to Palamon ye knyght
I trowe there nede lytel sermonyng
To make you to assenten to thys thyng
Cometh nere, & taketh your lady by the honde
Bytwyxt hem was maked anon the bonde
That hyght matrimony or mariage
By all the counsayle of the baronage
And thus with al blysse and melodye
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelye.
And god that al this world hath wrought
Sende hym his loue, that it hath so dere bought
For nowe is Palamon in al welle
Lyuyng in blysse, in richesse, and in hele
And Emelye hym loueth so tenderly
And he her serueth so gentelly
That neuer was there no worde hem bytwene
Of ielousye, or of any other tene
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye
And god saue al thys faire companye.

Here endeth the knyghtes tale, and here foloweth the Mylleres Prologue.

When that the knight had thus hys tale ytolde
In al the compayne nas ther yong ne olde
That he ne sayd, it was a noble storye
And worthy to be drawen in memorye
And namely the gentyls euerychone
Our hoste lough and swore, so mote I gone
This gothe a right, vnbokled is the male
Let se nowe who shal tel anothir tale
For truely, the game is wel begonne
Nowe telleth ye moriende ye prudonne
Somwhat, to quyte with the knyghtes tale
The myller for dronken was al pale
So that vnnethes upon hys hors he satte
Ne nolde auale neyther hood ne hatte
Ne abyde no man for hys curtesye
But in Pylates voyce he began to crye
And swore by armes, bloode, and bones
I can a noble tale for the nones (tale
With which I wol nowe quyte ye knyghtes his
Our hoste sawe that he was dronke of ale
And sayd: abyde Robyn leue brother
Some better man shal tel vs fyrst an other
Abyde, and let vs worche thriftely.
By goddes soule (quod he) that wol not I
For I wol speke, or elis go my way
Our hoste answerde: tel on a deuelway
Thou arte a foole, thy wytte is ouercome
Nowe herkeneth quod ye myller, al & some
But fyrst I make protestacion
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun
And therfore yf I mysspeke or say
wyte it the ale of Southwarke, I you pray
For I wol tel a legende and a lyfe
Bothe of a carpenter and hys wyfe
How that a clerke set a wrightes cappe.
The Reue answerde & sayd, stynte thy clappe
Let be thy lewde dronken harlotry
It is a synne, and eke a great folye
To apayren any man, or hym defame
And eke to bryng wyues in suche blame
Thou mayst ynough of other thynges sayn.
This dronke myller spake ful sone agayn
And sayd: leue brother Oswolde
who hath no wyfe is no cokolde
But I say not therfore that thou arte one
There ben ful good wyues many one
why arte thou angry with my tale nowe
I haue a wyfe parde, as wel as thou
yet nolde I for al the oren in my plough
Take upon me more than ynough
To demen of my selfe that I am one
I wol beleue that I am none.
An husbonde shulde not ben inquisityfe
Of goddes priuete, ne of hys wyfe
For so he fynde goddes foyson there
Of the remenaunt, nedeth nat to enquere.
what shulde I more say, but this Mylere
He nolde his wordes for no man forbere
But tolde his chorles tale in this manere

Me

Me forthynketh I shal rehersse it here
And therfore, every gentil wight I pray
Demethynot for gadelyes love, that I say
Of yuel entent, but that I moste reherce
Her tales al, how they better or werse
Or elis falsen some of my matere
And therfore, who so lyst it not to here
Turne ouer the lefe, and chese another tale
For ye shal fynde ynowe great and smale
Of hystoryal thyng, that toucheth gentilnesse
And eke morallite, and holynesse

Blame not me, yf that ye chose amys
The Myller is a cherle, ye knowe wel this
Also was the Reue eke, and other mo
And harlotry they tolde eke bothe two
Auyse you, and put me out of blame
And eke men shuld not make ernest of game.

Here endeth the Myllers prologue, and here after foloweth hys tale.



Whylom ther was dwelling in Orenforde
A ryche gnoffe, þ gestes herde to borde
And of his craft he was a carpenter
Wyth hym there was dwelling a poore scoler
Had yerned arte, but al his fantasye
Was turned to lerne Astrologye
And coude a certayne conclusyons
To demen by interrogacions
If that men asked hym in certayne houres
Whan þ men shulde haue drought or shoures
Or yf men asked hym what shulde befall
Of euery thyng, I may not rehersen al.
Thys clerke was cleped hende Nycholas
Of derne loue he coude and of solas
And therto he was slye and ryght priue
And lyke to a mayden meke to se
A chambre had he in that hostelry
Alone, withouten any company
Ful fetously dight with herbes sote
And he hym self as swete as is the rote
Of lycores, or of any spycerale
Hys almagyste, and bokes great and smale
Hys astrelagour, longyng for hys arte
Hys augrym stones lyeng fayre a parte
On shelues couched at his beddes heed
Hys presse ycouered with a foldyng reed
And al aboue there lay a gay sautrye
On whiche he made on nyghtes melodye
So swetely, that al the chambre ronge
And Angelus ad virginem he songe

And after

And after that he songe the kynges note
Ful often blessed was hys mery throte
And thus the swete clerke hys time spente
After hys frendes fyndynge and hys rente.
¶ Thys carpenter had wedded new a wyfe
whych that he loued more then hys lyfe
Of eyghtene yere she was of age
Jelous he was, and kepte her strayte in cage
For she was wyld, and yonge: & he was olde
And demed hym self to ben a cokewolde
He knewe not Cato: for hys wytte was rude
That bad men wedde her semilitude
Men shulde wedde after her astate
For youth and elde is often at debate
But syth he was fallen in the snare
He must endure, as other folke hys care
Fayre was this yonge wyfe, & therwithal
As any wyesele her body gentle and smale
A ceynte she wered, barred al wyth syluer
A barme clothe, as whyte as morowe mylke
Upon her lendes, ful of many a goore
whyte was her smock, & embrouded al before
And eke behynde on her colere aboute
Of cole blacke sylke, within and eke without
The tapes of her whyte volypere
were of the same sute of her colere
Her fyllet brode of syluer, and set ful hye
And sykerly, she had a lykerous eye
Ful smale ypulled were her browes two
And they were bent, and blacke as any sloo
She was moche more blyssful for to se
Then is the newe Perenet tre
And softer then the wol is of a wether.
And by her girdel honge a purse of lether
Tasled wyth sylke, and perled wyth latoun
In al thys worlde, to seken up and doun
There nys no man so wyse, that couth thenche
So gay a popelote, or so gay a wenche
Ful bryghter was the shynyng of her hewe
Then in the towre the noble forged newe
But of her songe, it was so loude & clere
As any swalowe sittynge on a bere
Therto she couth skyppe, & make a game
As any kydde or calfe folowyng hys dame
Her mouth was swete, as braket or the methe
Or hoorde of appples, ly̆ng in hey or hethe
Wynsynge she was, as is a ioly colte
Longe as a maste, & vpryght as a bolte
A brooche she bare on her lowe collere
As brode as the bosse of a bokelere
Her shoes were laced on her legges hye
She was a primrole, and a pyggesnye
For any lorde to lyggen in hys bedde
Or yet for any good yoman to wedde.
¶ Nowe sir and efte sire, so befel the caas
That on a day thys hende Nycholas
Fel wyth thys yonge wyfe to rage and play
whyle that her husbonde was at Osney
As clerkes ben ful subtel and queynte
And pryuely he caught her by the queynte
And sayd: I wys but I haue my wyll
For derne loue of the lemman I spyll
And helde her faste by the haunche bones
And sayd: lemman loue me wel at ones
Or I wol dyen also god me saue
And she sprange as a colte in a traue
And with her heed she wryeth fast away
And sayd: I wol not kysse the by my fay
why let be quod she, let be Nycholas
Or I wol crye out harrowe and alas
Do way your handes for your curtesye
Thys Nycholas gan mercy for to crye
And spake so fayre, & profered hym so faste
That she her loue graunted hym at laste
And swore her oth, by S. Thomas of Kent
That she wolde ben at hys commaundement
when that she may her leyser wel aspye
My husbonde is so ful of ielousye
That but ye warte wel, and be prime
I wotte ryght wel I nam but deed & she
Ye mote ben ful derne as in thys caas.
Nay therof care ye not, quod Nycholas
A clerke had lyther ly̆ly lyse hys whyle
But yf he couth a carpenter begyle
And thus they were accorded and ysworne
To awayten a tyme, as I haue sayd byforne
And whē Nicholas had don thus euery dele
And clacked her about the lendes wele
He kyssed her swete, then taketh hys sautry
And playeth faste, and maketh melody
Then fel it thus, that to ꝑ parysh cherche
(Cristes owne workes for to werche)
Thys good wyfe wente vpon an holydaye
Her forheed shone as bryght as any daye
So was it washe, when she let her werke
¶ Now was ther of ꝑ chirch a parysh clerke
The whych that was cleaped Absolon
Crulle was hys heare, & as golde it shon
And strouted as a fanne large and brode
Ful streyght & euen lay hys ioly shode
Hys rode was redde, hys eyen gray as goos
With Powles wyndowes corue on his shoos
In hosen redde he wente fetously
Yclyde he was ful smale and properly

Al in a kyrtel of lyght waget
Ful fayre and thycke ben the poyntes set
And therupon he had a gay surplyse
As whyte as is the blosome on the tryse
A merry chylde he was, so god me saue
Wel coude he let blode, clyppe, and shaue
And make a chartre of lande, & a quytaunce
In twenty maner coude he tryp and daunce
After the scole of Oxenforde tho
And with his legges casten to and fro
And play songes on a smale rybybe
Therto he songe sometyme a loude quynybe
And as wel couth he playe on a geterne
In al the towne nas brewhouse ne tauerne
That he ne vysyted with his solas
There any gay tapstere was
But sothly to say he was somwhat squaymous
Of fartynge, and of speche daungerous.
¶ Thys Absolon, that was joly and gaye
Goth with a censer on the sondaye
Censyng the wyues of the parysshe faste
And many a louely loke on hem he caste
And namely on thys carpenters wyfe
To loke on her hym thought a mery lyfe
She was so propre, and swete as hyrodone
I dare wel sayne yf she had ben a mous
And he a catte, he wold haue her hente anon
Thys parysshe clerke, thys joly Absolon
Hath in his herte such a loue longynge
That of no wyfe toke he none offrynge
For curtesye he sayd he wolde none
The moone, whe it was nyght bryght shone
And Absolon his geterne hath ytake
For paramours he thought for to wake
And forth he goeth, jelous and amerous
Tyl he came to the carpenters hous
A lytle after the cocke had ycrowe
And dressed hym by a shot wyndowe
That was vpon the carpenters wall
He syngeth in his voyce gentyl and small
Rowe dere lady, yf thy wyl be
I pray you that ye wol rewe on me
Ful wel accordyng to his geterynge.
¶ Thys carpenter awoke, & herde him synge
And spake vnto his wyfe anon
what Alyson, herest thou not Absolon
That chaunteth thus vnder our boures wal?
And she answerd her husbande ther withal
Yes god wot, I here hym euery dele
This passeth forth, what wil ye bet the wele
Fro day to day, thys joly Absolon
So worth her, that hym was wo bygon
He waketh al the nyght, and al the day
He kembeth his lockes brode, & made him gay
He woeth her by meanes and brocage
And swore, he wolde ben her owne page
He syngeth brokkyng as a nyghtyngale
He sent her pyment, meth, and spyced ale
And wafres pypynge hotte out of the glede
And for she was of toun, he profred her mede
For some folke wol be wonne for rychesse
And some for strokes, & some with gentylnesse
Sometyme to shew his lyghtnes & maistrye
He playeth Herodes on a scaffolde hye
But what auayleth hym, as in this caas?
So loueth she this hende Nicholas
That Absolon may blowe the bukkes horne
He ne had for his labour but a scorne
And thus she maketh Absolon her ape
And al his requeste turneth to a iape
For soth this prouerbe it is no lye
Men say thus alway, the nye slye
Maketh the ferre loue to be loth
For though y Absolon be woode or wroth
Because that he ferre was from her syght
This nye Nycholas stode in his lyght
But now beare the well hende Nycholas
For Absolon may wayle & synge alas
And so byfel it on a saterday
This carpenter was gone to Oseney
And hende Nicholas and Alyson
Accorded were to this conclusion
That Nycholas shulde shapen him a wyle
This sely jelous carpenter to begyle
And yf so be the game went aryght
She shulde slepe in his armes al nyght
For this was his desyre, and hers also
And ryght anone, wythouten wordes mo
This Nycholas no lenger wolde tarye
But doth ful softe vnto his chambre carye
Both meate and drynke, for a day or twey
And to her husbande bade her for to sey
yf that he asked after Nycholas
She shulde saye she nyst where he was
Of al that daye she sawe hym not with eye
She trowed he was in some maladye
For no crye that her mayde coude cal
He nolde answere, for naught y might befal
¶ Thus passeth forth al the yke saterday
That Nycholas styl in his chambre lay
And ete, dranke, & slept, & dyd what him lyste
Tyl sonday, that the sunne goeth to reste
¶ This sely carpenter hath great marueyle
Of Nicolas, or what thinge might him eyle

And

And sayd: I am a dead by saynte Thomas
It stondeth not aryght with Nycholas
God shylde that he dyed sodaynly
This worlde is nowe ful tykel sekerly
I sawe to day a coffe borne to cherche
That now on monday last I saw him werche
Go vp (quod he vnto his knaue) anone
Cleape at his dore, & knocke fast with a stone
Loke howe it is, and tel me boldely.
This knaue wente vp ful sturdely
And at the chambre dore, whyle that he stode
He cryed and knocked as he were woode
What howe, what do ye mayster Nicholay?
Howe may ye slepe al this longe day?
But al for naught, he herde not a worde.
An hole he founde ful lowe vpon a borde
There as the catte was wonte in to crepe
And at that hole he loked in ful depe
And at the laste he had of hym a syght
This Nicholas sate euer gapyng vpright
As he had keyked on the newe mone
Adown he gothe, & tolde his mayster sone
In what aray he sawe this ylke man
This carpenter to blyssen hym began
And sayd: nowe helpe vs seynt Frideswyde
A man wot lytel what hym betyde
This man is fallen, with his Astronomye
In some woodnesse, or in some agonye
I thought aye wel howe it sholde be
Men sholden not knowe of goddes preuete
Ye blessed be alway the lewde man
That naught but onely his byleue can.
Right so ferde another clerke ful astronomy
He walked in to the feldes for to pry
Vpon the sterres, to wete what sholde befal
Tyl he was in a marlpyt fal
He sawe not that, yet by saynte Thomas
Me reweth sore on hende Nicholas
He shal be arated out of his studyeng
If that I may, by Jesus heuen kyng.
Get me a staffe, that I may vnderspore
Whyle that thou Robyn heuest vp the dore
He shal out of his studyeng, as I gesse
And to the chambre dore he gan hym dresse
His knaue was a stronge carle for the nones
And by the haspe bare vp the dore at ones
Into the flore the dore fel anone.
This Nicholas sate as styl as any stone
And euer gaped vpwarde into the eyre.
This carpenter wende he were in dispeyre
And hente hym by the shulders myghtyly
And shoke hym harde, and cryed spytously
What Nicholas, what how loke adowne
Awake, and thynke on Christes passyon
I crouche ȳ from elues & fro wicked wightes
Therwith the nightspel he said anonrightes
On foure halues of the house aboute
And on the threshold of the dore without
Jesu Christ, and saynt Benedyght
Blysse this house from euery wycked wight
Fro the nyghtes mare the wyte Pater noster
Where wonnest thou sayntPeters sustere
And at the laste thys hende Nicholas
Gan for to syke sore, and sayd alas
Shal al this worlde be lost eftsones nowe?
This carpēter answerde: what sayst thou?
What thinke on god, as we do men ȳ swynke
This Nicholas answerde: fetch my drynke
And after wol I speke in preuete
Of certayne thynges that toucheth the & me
I wol tellen it none other man certayne.
This carpēter goth down, & cometh agayn
And brought of myghty ale a large quarte
And whan that eche of hem had dronke his parte
This Nicholas his dore fast shette
And downe the carpenter by hem sette
And sayd: John hoste myne lefe and dere
Thou shalte vpon thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight thou shalt my counsel wrey
For it is Christes counsayle that I say
And yf thou tel it any man, thou arte forlore
For this vengeaunce thou shalte haue therfore
That yf thou wrayest me, thou shalt be woode.
Nay Christ it forbyd for his holy bloode
Quod tho this selye man, I am no blabbe
Ne though I say it, I am not lefe to gabbe
Say what thou wolte, I shal it neuer tel
To childe ne wyfe by him that harowed hel.
Nowe John (q Nicholas) I wol not lye
I haue yfounden in myn astrologye
As I haue loked in the moone bright
That nowe on monday nexte, at quarter night
Shal fal a raynie, & that so wylde & woode
That halfe so great was neuer Noes floode
This world he said in lesse than in an houre
Shal al be drenyed, so hydous is the shoure
Thus shal mankynde drenche, & lese her lyfe.
This carpēter answerd & said: alas my wife
And shal she drenche? Alas myn Alyson
For sorowe of this he fel almoste adoun
And said: Is there no remedye in this caas?
Yes yes ful good (quod hende Nicholas)
If thou wolt werche after lore and rede
Thou maist not werche after thyn owne hede

For thus sayth Salomon, ‡ was ful trewe
Worke al by counsayle, & thou shalt not rewe
And ‡ thou wylt werken by good counsayle
I undertake, wythout mast or sayle
Yet shal I saue her, and the and me
Hast thou not herde howe saued was Noe
When ‡ our lorde had warned hym byforne
That al ‡ worlde with water should be lorne
Yes (quod the carpenter) ful yore ago
Hast thou not herde (quod Nicholas) also
The sorowe of Noe wyth hys felowshyp
Or that he myght gete hys wyfe to shyppe
Hym had leuer, I dare wel undertake
At thylke tyme, then al hys wethers blake
That she had a shyp her selfe alone
And therfor wost thou what is best to done
Thys asketh haste, and of an hasty thynge
Men may not preche ne make tarrynge
Anone go get vs fast into thys inne
A knedyng trowe or els a kemelyn
For eche of vs, but loke that they ben large
In which we mowe swymme as in a barge
And haue therin vytayles sufficiaunte
But for a day fye on the remenaunte
The water shal aslake and gon awaye
Aboute prime vpon the nexte daye
But Robyn may not wete of thys thy knaue
Ne eke thy mayde Gylle, I may not saue
Aske not why: for though thou aske me
I wol not tel goddes priuete
Suffyseth the, but ‡ thy wyttes be madde
Nor haue as great a grace as Noe hadde
To haue thy wyfe that I wel saue out of doute
Go nowe thy way, & spede the here aboute
But when thou hast for her, & the, and me
Y getten vs these knedynge tubbes thre
Then shalt thou hange hem in ‡ rofe ful hye
That no man of our purueyaunce espye
And when ‡ hast done thus as I haue sayde
And hast our vytayle fayre in hem layde
And eke an axe to smyte the corde a two
When ‡ the water cometh, that we may go
And breake an hole on hye vpon the gable
Vnto the garden warde, ouer the stable
That we may freely passen forth our waye
When that the great shoure is gone awaye
Then shalt ‡ swym as merry I undertake
As doth ‡ whyte ducke after her drake
Then wol I clepe, howe Alyson, how Iohn
Be merry: for the floode wol passe anon
And thou wolt sayn, hayle master Nicholay
Good morowe: for I se wel that it is day
And then we shal be lordes al our lyfe
Of al the worlde, as was Noe and his wyfe
But of one thynge I warne the ful ryght
Be wel auysed on that yike nyght
That we be entred into the shyppes borde
That none of vs ne speake not a worde
Ne clepe ne crye, but ben in hys prayer
For it is goddes owne heste dere.
Thy wife & thou mot hange fayre a twinne
For that betwyxte you shalbe no synne
No more in lokynge then there shal in dede
Thys ordinaunce is sayd, go God the spede
To morowe at nyght, whe men be al aslepe
Into our knedynge tubbes wol we crepe
And sytten there, abydynge goddes grace
Go now thy waye, I haue no lenger space
To make of thys no lenger sermonyng
Men sayne thus: send ‡ wyse, & say nothyng
Thou art so wyse, it nedeth the not to teche
Go saue our lyues, and that I the beseche
Thys sely carpenter goeth forth his waye
Ful ofte he sayd, alas and welaway
And to hys wyfe he tolde hys priuete
And she was ware, & knewe it bet then he
What al thys queynt cast was for to sey
But nathelesse she ferde as she wolde dey
And sayd: alas, go forth thy way anone
Helpe vs to scape or we be dede echone
I am thy trewe verey wedded wyfe
Go dere spouse, and helpe to saue our lyfe
Lo, whych a great thynge is affection
Men may dye of ymagynation
So depe may impression be take.
Thys sely carpenter begynneth to quake
Hym thynketh verely that he may se
Noes floode come walterynge as the see
To drenchen Alyson, hys hony dere
He weepeth, waileth, and maketh sory chere
He syketh, with many a sory thought
He goeth, & getteth hym a knedyng trough
And after a tubbe, and a kemelyn
And priuely he sent hem to hys in
And hynge hem in the rofe ful priuely
Hys owne honde, he made hym ladders thre
To clymben by the ronges & by the stalkes
Into the tubbes hongyng by the balkes
And hem vitayled, both trough and tubbe
With breed and chese, & good ale in a tubbe
Suffysyng ryght ynowe, as for a daye
But er that he had made al thys arraye
He sent hys knaue, and eke hys wenche also
Vpon hys nede to London for to go

And

And on ꝑ monday, when it drowe to nyght
He shette his dore, without candel lyght
And dressed al thyng, as it shulde be
And shortly clomben by al thre
They syten syl not fully a furlonge way
Now pater noster clum, sayd Nicolay
And clum qꝺ Johan, & cluom sayd Alison
Thys carpenter sayd hys deuocion
And syl he sye, and byddeth hys prayere
Awaytynge on the rayne, yf he it here.
¶ The deed slepe, for werry besynesse
Fel on thys carpenter, ryght as I gesse
Aboute curfewe tyme, or lytel more
For trauayle of hys gost he groneth sore
And eke he coueth, for hys heed myslay
And doun of ꝑ ladder the stalketh Nicolay
And Alyson ful softe after the spedde
Withouten wordes mo they went to bedde
There as the carpenter was woned to lye
There was the reuel, and the melodye
And thus lyeth Alyson and Nycholas
In busynesse of myrth and solas
Tyl that the bel of laudes gan to ringe
And freres in the chaunsel gon to synge.
¶ Thys parysh clerke, thys amerous Absolõ
That is for loue alway so wo bygon
Upon the monday was at Oseney
With com pany, hym to dysporte and play
And asked vpon a case a cloysterere
Ful prively, after John the carpentere
And he drewe him a parte out of the chyrche
And sayd I not: I saw him not here wyrche
Syth saturday, I trowe that he be went
For tymbre, there our Abbot hath hym sent
For he is wont for tymbre for to go
And dwellen at the grange a day or two
Or els he is at hys house certayne
Where that he be, I can not sothly sayne.
Thys Absolon, ful ioly was and lyght
And thought, now is my tyme to walk al night
For sekerly, I sawe hym not sterynge
About hys dore, syth day began to spryngе
So mote I thryue, I shal at cockes crowe
Ful prively knocke at hys wyndowe
That stant ful lowe vpon hys boures wal
To Alyson wol I nowe tellen al
My loue longynge: for yet I shal not mysse
That at the leest way I shal her kysse
Some maner comforte shal I haue parfaye
My mouth hath ycched al thys longe daye
That is a sygne of kyssynge at the leest
Alwyght me mette eke, that I was at a feest
Therfor I wol go slepe an houre or twey
And al the nyght then wol I wake & pley.
¶ When ꝑ the fyrst cocke hath crowe anon
Up ryst thys ioly louer Absolon
And hym arayeth gay, and in queynt denyce
But fyrst he cheweth greyns and lycorice
To smellen sote, or he had kempt hys here
Under hys tonge a trueloue he bere
For therby he wende to ben gracious
He romeyth to the carpenters house
And syll he stante vnder the shot wyndowe
Unto hys brest it raught, it was so lowe
And softe he knocked, with a semely soun.
what do ye honycombe, swete Alysoun
My fayre bryde, my swete cynamome
Awaketh lemman myne, and speaketh to me
Ful lytel thynken ye vpon my wo
That for your loue I swelte there as I go
No wonder is though I swelte and swete
I mone as doth the lambe after the tete
Wyss lemman, I haue suche loue longyng
That lyke a turtle trewe is my mournyng
I may not eaten no more then may a mayde
Go fro the wyndowe Jacke foole she sayde
As helpe me God and swete saynt Jame
I loue another or els I were to blame
Wel bet then the by Jesu Absolon
Go forth thy way or I wol caste a ston
And let me slepe, a twenty deuel way
¶ Alas quoth Absolon and welaway
That trewe loue was euer so vuel bystette
Then kysse me, syn it may be no bette
For Jesus loue, and for the loue of me.
wylt ꝑ then go thy way therwith qꝺ she
¶ Ye certes lemman quoth thys Absolon
Then make the redy qꝺ she I come anon
And vnto Nycholas she sayd stylle
Nowe peace, and thou shalt laugh thy fyl
This Absolon doun set him vꝑ his knees
And sayd: I am a lorde at al degrees
For after thys I hope there cometh more
Lemman thy grace, & swete bryde thy more.
The wyndowe she vndoth, & that in haste
Haue do (qꝺ she) and spede the faste
Lest not our neyghbours the aspye.
This Absolõ gan wype his mouth ful dryе
Derke was the nyght, as pytche or cole
And at ꝑ wyndow she put out her ers hole
And Absolon him fette nerther bet ne wers
But with his mouth he kyst her bare ers
Ful sauerly, or he were ware of thys.
Abacke he sterte, & thought it was amys

Supposed he wyste a woman hath no berde
He felte a thyng al rough, and long yherde
And sayde, alas what have I do quod he
¶ Te he quod he, & clapte the wyndowe to
And Absolon gothe hym the a foule pas
I berde a berde, sayd hende Nycholas
By goddes corpus, this gothe fayre & wele.
This sely Absolon herde it every dele
And on hys lyppe he gan for angre byte
And to himselue he sayd, I shal the quyte
Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lyps
With dust, with sonde, with strawe, with chyps
But Absolon, that sayth ful often alas
My soule betake I to Mahomas
But me were leuer than al this town, quod he
Of this dispyte auenged for to be.
¶ Alas (quod he) alas that I ne had yheynt
His hote loue is colde, and al queynt
For fro the tyme that he had kyst her ers
Of paramours he set not a kers
For he was heled of his maladye
Ful ofte paramours he gan defye
And weye as dothe a chylde that is ybete
A softe pace he wente ouer the strete
Vnto a smythe, men callen dan Gerueys
That in his forge smyteth ploweharneys
He sharpeth shares, and coulters besyly
This Absolon knocketh al esily
And sayd vndo Gerueys, and that anon
¶ What who arte thou? It am I Absolon
What Absolon, what for Christes swete tre
Why ryse ye so rathe, ey benedicite
what eyleth you, some gay gyrle god it wote
Hath brought you thus on the berystote
By saynte note, ye wote wel what I mene
¶ This Absolon ne raught not a bene
Of al his play, no worde agayne he gaffe
He hath more towe on his distaffe
Than Gerueys knewe, & sayd frende so dere
The hote coulter, in the chymney here
As lene it me, I have therwith to done
I wyl bryng it the agayne ful sone.
¶ Gerueys answerde: certes were it golde
Or in a poke nobles al vntolde
Thou shuldest it have, as I am trewe smyth
Eyrnmistes fere, what wol ye don therwith
Therof (quod Absolon) be as be may
I shal wel tellen the by tomorowe day
And caught the coulter by the colde stele
Ful softe out at the dore gan he stele
And went vnto the carpenters wal
He coughed fyrst, & knocked therwithal
Vpon the wyndowe, right as he dyd ere.
¶ This Alyson answerde: who is there
That knocketh so? I warante he his a theefe.
Why nay (quod he) god wot my swete leefe
I am thyn Absolon, thyn owne derlyng
Of golde (quod he) I have the brought a ryng
My mother yaue it me, so god me saue
Ful fyne it is, and therto wel ygraue
This wol I yeue the, yf thou me kysse.
This Nycholas was ryssen for to pysse
And thought he wolde amenden all the lape
He shulde kysse his ers er that he shape
And vp the wyndowe dyd he hastely
And out his ers he put ful prively
And ouer the buttocke to the haunche boon
And therwith spake this clerke, this Absolon
Spekе swete byrde, I not where thou arte.
¶ This Nycholas anon let flern a farte
As great as it had ben a thunder dent
That with the stroke he was wel nygh yblent
And he was redy with his yron hote
And Nycholas in the arse he smote.
Of gothe the skyn an handbrede about
The hote culter brende so his toute
And for the smerte he wende for to dye
As he were woode, he gan for to crye
Helpe, water, water, for goddes herte
This carpenter out of his slomber sterte
And herde one crye water, as he were wood
And thought, alas now cometh Noes flood
And sterte him vp without wordes mo
And with an ax, he smote the corde a two
And doune gothe al, he soude neyther to sel
Breed ne ale, but doune shortly he fel
Vpon the flore, and there a swowne he lay
¶ Vp sterte this Alyson & hende Nycholay
And cryed out, and harrowe in the strete
The neyghbours, both smal and grete
In toune, for to gauren on this man
That a swoune lay, pale yhe and wan
For with that fal brosten hath he his arme
But stonden he muste vnto his owne harme
For when he spake, he was ybeten adoun
With hende Nycholas, and Alysoun
They told every man, that he was woode
He was agaste so of Noes floode
Throughe fantasye, that of his vanyte
He hath getten him knedyng tubbes thre
And hath hem honged in the rofe aboue
And that he prayed hem for goddes loue
To sytten in the roofe par compayne
The folke gan laughen at his fantasye

And in to the roofe they kyken and they gape
And turned al hys erneſt in to a iape
For what ſo this carpenter anſwerde
It was for naught, no man his reaſon herde
With othes great, he was ſworne adowne
For euerych clerke anon he ſte with other
They ſaid ꝑ mā was wood, my leue brother
And euery wyght gan laughen at this ſtrife.
¶ Thus ſwyued was the carpenters wyfe
For al hys keping, and hys ielouſye
And Abſolon hath kyſt her nether eye
And Nycholas is ſhalded in the toute
Thys tale is done, & God ſaue al the route.

Here endeth the Millers tale, and here after folowyth the Reues Prologue.

When folke had laughed at thys nyce caas
Of Abſolon & hende Nycolas
Diuers folke diuerſly they ſayde
But for the moſt parte they loughe & playde
Ne at thys tale I ſawe no man hym greue
But it were onely Oſwolde the reue
Bycauſe he was of carpenters craafte
A lytel ire in hys herte ſtafte
He gan to grutchen and blamen it a lyte
Sothly quod he, ful wel couthe I ꝑ quyte
With bleryng of a proude millers eye
If that me lyſt to ſpeke of rybaudrye
But ek I am olde, me luſt not play for age
Gaaſle tyme is done, my fodder is forage
This whyte toppe writeth myne olde yeres
For ſothe my play was, now white be myn heres
But yet I fare as doth an open ers
That ylke fruite is euer lenger the wers
Tyl it be rotten in mullok, or in ſtre
We olde men, I dreden ſo fare we
Tyl we be rotten can we not be rype
We hoppe alway, whyle the world wol pype
For in our wyl there ſtyketh euer a nayle
To haue an hore heed and a grene tayle
As hath a leke, for though our myght be gone
Our wyl deſyreth folye euer in one
For whā we may not don, thā wol we ſpeke
Yet in our aſſhen olde, is fyre yreken.
¶ Four gledes han we, whiche I ſhal deuyſe
Auaunting, lyeng, angre, and couetyſe
Theſe four ſparkles longen on to elde
Our olde lymmes mowe wel ben vnwelde
But wyl ne ſhal not fayle, that is ſothe
And yet haue I alway a coltes tothe
As many a yere as it is paſſed henne
Syn that my tappe of lyfe began to renne
For ſikerly, whan I was borne anone
Deethe dronge the tappe of lyfe, & let it gone
And euer ſyns hath the tappe yronne
Tyl that almoſt al empty is the tonne
The ſtreme of life now droppeth on ꝑ chimb
The ſely tonge may wel ringe and clymb
Of wretchednelle, that paſſed is ful yore
With olde folke ſaue dotage is no more
¶ Whan ꝑ our hoſt had herde this ſermoning
He gan to ſpeke as lordly as a kyng
And ſayd: what amounteth al thys wytte?
What ſhal we ſpeke al day of holy wrytte?
The dyuel made a Reue to preche
Or a ſouter a ſhypman, or a leche.
Say forthe thy tale, and tary nat the tyme
Lo Depforde, and it is halfe way prime
Lo Grenewyche, that many a fhrewe is in
It were tyme thy tale for to begyn
¶ Nowe ſirs quod thus Oſwolde the Reue
I pray you al, that ye not you greue
Thā I anſwere, and ſomdele ſet hys houfe
For leful it is with force force of thoute
This dronken myller hath ypolde vs here
Howe that begyled was a carpentere
Parauenture in ſhorne, for I am one
And by your leaue, I ſhal hym quyte anone
Ryght in his churles termes wol I ſpeke
I pray to God hys necke mote breke
He can wel in myne eye ſene a ſtalke
But in his owne he can not ſene a balke

Here endeth the Reues Prologue.



Here begynneth the Reues tale.

AT Trompyngton, not far fro Cambrydge
Ther goth a broke, and ouer that a brydge
Upon the whyche broke ther stant a melle
And this is very sothe, as I you telle
A millere was there dwellyng many a day
As any pecocke he was proude and gay
Pypen he couthe, and fyllhen, a nettes bete
And turne cuppes, & wel wrastle and shete
Aye by hys belte he bare a longe panade
And of a swerde ful trenchaunt was ꝑ blade
A toly poperre bare he in hys pouche
Ther was no mã for peryl durst hym touche
A Sheffelde thwytel bare he in hys hose
Rounde was his face, & camyssed was his nose
As pylled as an ape was hys skull
He was a market beterer at the full
There durst no wyght bonde on him ledge
But he ne swore he shulde abedge
A theefe he was for sothe, of corne and mele
And that a slye, and vsaunt for to stele
His name was hoten deynous Symkyn
A wyfe he had, comen of noble kyn
The parson of the towne her father was
With her he yafe ful many a panne of brass
For that Symkyn shulde in his bloode alye
She was yfostred in a nonnerye
For Symkin wolde no wyfe, as he sayde
But she were wel ynourished, and a mayde
To sauen hys astate of yomanrye
And she was proude, and perte as a pye
A ful fayre syght was it vpon hem two
On holy dayes byfore her wolde he go
With hys typet wounden aboute his heed
And she came after in a gyte of reed
And Symkin had hosen of the same
There durst no wyght clepen her but dame
Was none so hardy, that wente by the way
That with her ones durst rage or play
But ꝑ he wolde be slayne of Symkyn
With panade, or with knyfe, or bodkyn
For ielous folkes ben perillous euermo
Algates they wolde her wyues wende so
And eke for she was somdele smoterlyche
She was as dygne as water in a dyche
And as ful of hoker and of besmare
As thoughe that a lady shulde her spare
What for her kyndred, and her norriture
That she had lerned in the nonnerye.
A Doughter had they bytwyxt hem two
Of twenty yere, withouten any mo
Sauyng a chylde ꝑ was of halfe yere of age
In cradell it lay, and was a propre page
This wenche thicke and wel ygrowen was
Wyth camyssed nose, and eyen gray as glas

wyth

with buttockes blode, & brestes rounde & hye
But right fayre was her heare, I wol not lie
The parson of ỳ town, for she was so fayre
In purpose was to maken her hys heyre
Bothe of hys catell, and hys messuage
And straunge he made it of her mariage
His purpose was to be shewen her hye
Into some worthy blode of auncetry
For holy churches good moste ben dispended
On holy churches blode that is descended
Therfore he wolde, hys holy blode honour
Though that he holy churche shulde devour
¶ Great soken hath this Wyller out of doute
With whete and malte, of all the londe about
And namely ther was a great college
Men clepen it the Soler hall of Cambrege
Ther was her whete, & eke her malt igrounde
And on a day it happed in a stounde
Sicke lay the Maunciple on a malady
Men wenden wisely that he shulde dye
For which this myller stale both whete and
An hundred tyme more than before (corn
For there before, he stale but curtesly
But nowe he was a thefe outrageously
For whiche the warden chydde and made fare
But therof sette the Wyller not a tare
He craked, bosted, and swore it nas not so
Thã were there yonge povre scholers two
That dwelten in the hall of whiche I say
Testife they were, and lusty for to play
And onely for her myrthe, and her revelrye
Upon the warden besily they crye
To yeve hem leave, but a lyttel stounde
To gon to mylle, to sene her corne ygrounde
And hardely they durst lay her necke
The myller shuld not stale hem half a pecke
Of corne by sleyght, ne by force hem reve.
And at the laste the warden yaue hem leve
Johan highte that one, & Aleyn highte ỳ other
Of a town they were both, ỳ highte Strother
Farre in the northe, can I not tel where.
This Aleyn maketh al redy his gere
And on a horse, the sacke he caste anon
Forthe goth Aleyn the clerke, and also John
With good swerde and bocheler by her syde
John knewe the way, hym nedeth no gyde
And at the mylle dore the sacke down he layth
¶ Aleyn spake first: al hayle Symkin in fayth
How fares thy fayre doughter, & thy wyfe
Aleyn welcom quod Symken by my lyfe
And John also: how now, what do ye here
By god Symon, quod John, nede has no pere
Hym behoueth serue him selfe ỳ has no swain
Or els he is a fole, as clerkes sayne
Our Maunciple I hope he wyl be deed
Swa werkes aye the wanges in his heed
And therfore is I come, and eke Alayne
To grynde our corne & cary it home agayne
We pray you spede vs heme in that ye may
It shalbe don, quod Symkyn, be my fay
What wol ye don, while it is in hande
By god, right by the hopper wol I stande
Quoth John: & sen how gates ỳ corne goth
Yet sawe I neuer by my father kyn (in
Howe that the hopper wagges to and fra
Alayne answerd: Johan wylte thou swa
Than wol I be bynethe by my crowne
And se howe the mele falles adowne
Into the troughe, that shalbe my disporte
Quoth Johan, in fay I may ben one of your
I is as ill a myllere as is ye. (sorte
This Wyller smyleth at her nycete
And thought al nys done but for a wyle
Who wene that no man may hem begyle
But it be myry, yet shal I blere her eye
For al the sleyght in her philosofye
The more queynte clerkes that they make
The more wol I steale whan I take
In stede of flour yet wol I gyue hem bране
The greatest clerkes ben not the wyseste men
As whilom to the wolfe spake the vyxare
Of al her art counte I not a tare.
¶ Out at the dore he gothe ful pryuely
Whan that he sawe his time, ful softely
He loked vp & doune, til he had yfounde
The clerkes horse, there as he stode ybounde
Behynde the Mylle, under a lesel
And to the horse he gothe him fayre and wel
He strepeth of the bridel right anon.
And whã ỳ horse was loce, he gan to gon
Towarde the fen there wylde mares ryne
And forth ỳ wente, through thicke & thynne
The myller gothe agayne no worde he sayde
But doth his note, & ỳ these clerkes playde
Til ỳ her corne was fayre & wel ygrounde
And whan the meale was sacked & ybounde
This John goth out, & fonde her horse away
And gan to crye, harowe and welaway
Our horse is loste Aleyne for goddes bones
Steppe on thy fete mã, come forth al atanes
Alas our wardeyn has hys palfray lorne.
¶ This Aleyn al forgate bothe mele & corne
Al was out of mynde hys husbondrye
What, whylke way is he gon, he gan to crye.

The

The wyfe came leapyng inwarde at a rene
She layd alas, he gothe to the fenne
with wylde mares, as faste as he may go
Unthrifte come on hys honde, þ bonde him so
And he þ better shulde haue kept the reyne.
Alas q John, Aleyn for Christes peyne
Lay downe thy swerde, & I shal myn alswa
I is ful swyfte God wate as is a raa
By goddes sale he shal not shape vs bathe
why ne haddest thou put the capel in þ lathe
Il heyle Aleyn by god thou is a fonne.
¶ These sely clerkes han ful faste yronne
Towarde the fenne, Aleyn and eke John
And whan the myller sawe þ they were agõ
He halfe a bussbel of her floure hath take
And bade hys wyfe knede it in a kake
He sayd, I trowe the clerkes were a ferde
Yet can a myller make a clerkes berde
For al her arte, yet let hem gon her way
Lo where they gon, let the chyldren play
They get him not so lightly by my crowne
These sely clerkes rennen vp and downe
With kepe kepe, tolla warthereere
Ga whystle thou, and I shal kepe hym here
But shortly, eyl it was very nyght
They couth not though they did al her might
Her caple catche, he ran away so faste
Eyl in a dyche they caught hym at the laste
¶ Wery and wete, as beestes in the rayne
Cometh sely John, & w hym cometh Aleyn
Alas quod John the day that I was borne
Nowe are we dryuen to hethe and to scorne
Our corne is stole, men wol vs fooles cal
Bothe the warden, and our felowes al
And namely the myller, waylaway
Thus playneth John, as he gothe by þ way
Towarde the myll, & bayarde in his honde
The myller syrryng by the fyre he fonde
For it was night & ferther might they nought
But for the loue of god they him besought
Of herbrough and ease, as for her peny
¶ The myller said ayen, if there ben any
Suche as it is, yet shal ye haue your part
My house is streyte, but ye haue learned art
Ye can by argument make a place
A myle brode, of twenty foote of space
Let se nowe yf thys place may suffyse
Or make it rómer w speche, as is your gyse
Now Symõd, said John by saint Cutberde
Aye is thou merry, & that is fayre answerde
I haue herd sai, mé should take of twa thinges
Soyth as he fyndes or swilke as he bringes
But specially I pray the hoste dere
Get vs some meate & drinke, & make vs chere
And we wyl pay trewly at the ful
With empty honde, men may no hawkes tul
Lo here our syluer redy for to spende.
The myller to þ towne his doughter sende
For ale and breed, and rosted hem a goos
& bounde her hors he shulde no more go loos
And in his own chambre he made a bedde
With shetes & with chalons fayre yspredde
Not from his owne bedde, ten fote or tweine
Hys doughter had a bedde al by her seine
Right in the same chambre, by and by
It myght be no bette, and the cause why.
Ther was no rowmer herbrowe in þ place
They soupen, & they speken of myrth & solace
And dronken euer strenge ale at beste
Aboute mydnight went they to reste.
¶ Wel hath this myller vernysshed his heed
Ful pale he was for dronken, & nothyng reed
He gaspeth, and he speketh through his nose
As he were in the quacke, or in the pose
To bedde he gothe, and with him his wyfe
As any Jay was she lyght and iolyfe
So was her ioly whystel wel ywette
The crabbed at the beddes fete was sette
To rocken, and to rene the chylde to souke
And whan þ dronken was al in the crouke
To bedde went the daughter right anon
To bedde gothe Aleyn and eke John
There nas no more, hem needed no dwale
This myller hath so wisely bybbed ale
That as an horse he snorteth in his slepe
Ne of hys tayle behynde he toke no kepe
His wyfe bare to hym a burdon wel strong
Men might hem bere route a forlonge.
The wenche routeth eke par company.
¶ Aleyn the clerke, that herde this melody
He poked on John, & saide slepest thou
Herdest thou euer swylke a lange er nowe
Lo swylke a couplyng is ywyst hem al
A wylde fyre on her bodyes fal,
Who herde euer swylke a ferly thynge
Ye, they shal haue the floure of euel endyng
Al this lange nyght tydes me no reste
But yet nafors, al shal be for the beste
For Johan (sayd he) as euer mote I thryue,
If that I may, yon wenche wol I swyue
Some elerment hath lawe shapen vs
For John there is a lawe that sayth thus
That yf a man in one poynte ben a greued
That in an other he shal be releued

Lure

Our corne is stolne, sothly it is no nay
And we haue had an yuel fyt to day
And syn I shal haue none amendement
Agayne my losse I wyl haue myn element
By goddes sale, it shal none other be.
¶ Thys Iohan answerde: Aleyn, auyse the
The myller is a perylous man, he sayde
And yf that he out of his slepe abrayde
He myght don vs bathe a vilonye.
Aleyn answerd: I counte him not worth a fly
And vp he ryste, and by the wenche he crept.
This wenche lay vpright, and faste slept
Tyl he so nye was, er she myght aspye
That it had ben to late for to crye
And shortly for to sayne, they were at on
Now play Aleyn, for I wol speke of Iohn.
This Iohn lay syl a forlonge way or two
And to hym selfe he maketh routh and wo
Alas (q he) this is a wycked tape
Nowe may I say, I is but an ape
yet hath my felowe somwhat for his harme
He hath the millers doughter in hys arme
He auntreth hym, and hath hys nede yspedde
And I lye as a drasse sacke in my bedde
And whan this iape is tolde a nother dey
I shal be holde a dasse, or a cokeney
I wol aryse, and auntre me it by my fay
Unhardy is vnsely, thus men say.
And vp he rose, and softely he wente
Unto the cradel, and in his arme it hent
And bare it softely to his beddes fete
Sone after the wyfe her routyng lete
And gan awake, and went her out to pysse
And came agayn, and gan the cradell mysse
And groped here and there, but she founde none
Alas (q she) I had almoste mysgone
I had almost gone to the clerkes bedde
Eye benedycite, than had I foule yspedde
And forthe she gothe, tyl she the cradel fonde
And she gropeth alwey further with her honde
And founde the bedde, and thought nat but good
Because that the cradel by it stode
And nyste where she was, for it was derke
But fayre and wel she crepte in by the clerke
And lyeth ful stil, and wold haue caught a slepe
Within a while this Iohn the clerke vp lepe
And on this good wyfe he layde ful sore
So mery a fyt had she nought ful yore
And pricked harde and depe, as he were madde
This ioly lyfe haue these two clerkes ladde
Tyl that the thryde cocke began to syng.
¶ Aleyn wexe wery in the dawnyng
For he had swonken al the longe nyght
And sayd, farwel Malyn swete wyght
The day is comen, I may no lenger byde
But euermo, where so I go or ryde
I am thyn owne clerke, so haue I hele.
Nowe dere lemman (q she) go, farwele
But or thou go, one thyng I wol the tell
Whan thou wendest homwarde by the Well
Ryght at the entre of the dore behynde
Thou shalt a cake of halfe a bushel fynde
That was ymaked of thyn owne mele
Whiche that I helpe my syre to stele
And good lemman god the saue and kepe
And with the worde she gan almoste to wepe.
¶ Aleyn vprist, and thought er it dawe
He wolde go crepen in by his felawe
And founde the cradel with his honde anon
By god thought he, al wronge haue I gon
My heed is totty of my swynke to nyght
That maketh me that I go not aryght
I wot wel that by the cradel I haue myssed go
Here lyeth the Myller and his wyfe also
And forthe he gothe on twenty deuel way
Unto the bedde, there as the myller lay
He wende haue croped by his felowe Iohn
And by the Myller he crepte in anon
And caught hym by the necke, and softe he spake
And sayd: Iohan, thou swynesheed awake
For Cristes soule, and here a noble game
For by that lorde, that called is saynt Iame
As I haue thryse in this shorte nyght
Swyued the millers doughter bolt vpright
Whyles thou hast, as a coward ben agaste.
Ye false harlot (quod the myller) haste
A false traytour, false clerke (quod he)
Thou shalte be dede by goddes dignyte
Who durste be so bolde to disparage
My doughter, that is come of suche lynage
And by the throte bolle he caught Aleyn
And he him hent dispytously agayne
And on the nose he smote him with his fest
Downe ran the blode streme vpon his brest
And in the flore, with mouthe and nose ybroke
They walowen, as dothe pygges in a poke
And vp they gon, and downe ayen anone
Tyl that the myller spurnde on a stone
And downe he fyl backwarde vpon his wyfe
That wyste nothyng of this nyce stryfe
For she was fal a slepe a lytel wyght
With Iohn the clerke, that waked had al nyght
And with the fal, out of her slepe she brayde
Helpe holy crosse of Bromholme she sayde

In ma-

In mornyng tyme, sayde the Jeal
Awake Symonde, the fende is on me fal
My herte is broken, helpe I am but deed
There lieth one on my wombe & on my heed
Helpe Symkyn, for these false clerkes fyghte
This iohn stert vp, as fast as euer he might
And graspeth by the walles to and fro
To fynde a staffe, and she stert vp also
And knewe the estres bet thã dyd this John
And by the wal she founde a staffe anon
And sawe a lytel shemeryng of a light
For at an hole in shone the moone bright
And by that lyght she sawe hem bothe two
But sykerly she nyste who was who
But as she sey a whyte thyng in her eye
And whan she gan this whyte thyng aspye
She wende the clerke had worated a volupere
And vp the staffe she drowe alway ner & ner
And wende haue hyt this Aleyn at ful
And smote the myller on the pyled skul
That down he gothe, & cryed, harowe I dye
These clerkes bete hym wel, and let hym lye
And arayeth hem, and toke her horse anon
And eke her meale, and on her way they gon
And at the mylle doze they toke her cake
Of halfe a bushel floure, wel ybake.

Thus is the proude myller wel ybete
And hath ylost the grendyng of the whete
And payde for the supper euerydele
Of Aleyn and of Johan, that bete hym wele
Hys wyfe is swyued, and his doughter als
Lo suche it is a Myller to be fals
And therfore this prouerbe is ful sothe
Hym dare not wel wene that yuel doethe
A gylour shal hym selfe begyled be
And god that sytte hye in maieste
Saue al this company, great and smale
Thus haue I quyt the myller in his tale.

Here endeth the Reues tale, and here folowe th the Cokes prologue.

The Coke of London, whyle that the Reue spake
For ioye hym thought he clawde hym on the bake
A ha (q he) for Cristes passyon
This myller hath a sharpe conclusyon
Upon his argument of herbygage
Wel sayd Salomon in hys langage
Ne bryng not euery man in to thyn hous
For herbrowyng by nyght is perelous
Wel ought a man auysed for to be
Whom that he brought in to hys pryuete
I pray to god so yeue me sorowe and care
If euer sythen I hyght Hodge of ware
Herde I myller bette ysette a werke
He had a iape of malyce in the derke.
But god forbyd that we shynten here
And therfore yf ye bouche safe to here
A tale of me, that am a poore man
I wol you tel as wel as I can
A lytel iape, that fel in our cyte

Our host sayd, syr a graunte it be
Nowe tel on Rodger, loke that it be good
For many a pasty haste thou letten blood
And many a Jacke of Douer hast thou solde
That hath be twyse hotte and twyse colde
Of many a pilgrym hast thou Cristes curse
For of thy parsle yet fare they the worse
That they haue eaten wyth thy stobel goos
For in thy shoppe is many a fye loos
Nowe tel on gentle Rogere by thy name
But yet I pray the be not wrothe for game
A man may say ful sothe in game and play.

Thou sayst ful sothe (q Roger) by my fay
But sothe play, quade play, as the flemyng sayth
And therfore Henry Bayly by thy fayth
Be thou not wrothe, or we departen here
Though that my tale ben of an hostelere
But natheles, I wol not telle it yet
But er we parte, ywys thou shalte be quyt
And therwithal he lough and made chere
And sayd his tale, as ye shullen after here.

Here endeth the Cokes prologue, and here folowe th hys tale.



A Prentise whilom dwelte in our cyte
And of the craft of vitayllers was he
Gaillard he was, as goldfynch in the shawe
Broune as a berry, a proper shorte felawe
with lockes blake, kempt ful fetously
Dauncer he couthe ful wel and iolily
He was called Perkyn Reuelour
He was as ful of loue and paramour
As is the hyue ful of hony swete
wel was the wenche wyth hym might mete
At euery bridal wolde he syng and hoppe
He loued bette the tauernes than the shoppe
For wohan any ridyng was in chepe
Out of the shoppe thider wolde he lepe
Tyl that he had al the syght yseyn
And daunced wel, he wolde not come ageyn
And gadred hym a meyny of hys sorte
To hop and syng, and make suche disporte
And there they setten steuyn for to mete
To playen at the dise in suche a strete
For in the cyte nas there no prentise
That lasser couthe casten a payre of dise
Than Perkin couthe, and therto he was fre
Of his dispence, in place of priuyte
That founde hys master wele in his chaffare
For oftymes he founde his bord ful bare
For sikerly, a prentise reuelour
That haunteth dise, riotte, or paramour
His master shal it in hys shoppe abye
Al haue he no parte of the mysdraye
For thefte and riotte, they ben conuertible
Al can he play on gyterne or on rubible
Reuel and trouthe, as in lowe degre
They ben ful wrothe al day, as men may se
This ioly prentise, with his mayster abode
Tyl he were nye out of his prentishode
Al were he shrybbed bothe early and late
And somtyme ledde with reuel to Newgate
But at the last, his maister him bithought
Upon a day, whan he hys paper sought
Of a prouerbe, that saith this same worde
Wel bette is rotten apple out of horde
Than that it rote al the remenaunt
So fareth it by a riottous seruaunt
It is moche lesse harme to let him passe
Than he shende al the seruauntes in the place
Therfore his maister gaue hym a quitaunce
And badde him go, wo sorowe & myschaunce
And thus this ioly prentise had his leue
Nowe lette hym rist al the nyght or leue
And for there is no theke without a louke
That helpeth hym to waste or to souke
Of that he bryde can, or borowe may
Anon he sent hys bedde and hys array
Unto a compere of hys owne sorte
That loued dice, reuel, and disporte
And had a wyfe, that helde for countenaunce
A shoppe, and swyued for her sustenaunce.

Here endeth the Cokes tale, & here folowyth the man of lawes prologue.

Our hoste sawe wel, that the bright sonne
The arke of hys artificiall daye hath ronne
The fourthe parte, & halfe an houre more
And though he were not depe expert in lore
He wyste it was the eyghtene day
Of Apryl, that is the messanger to May
And sawe wel, that the shadowe of euery tre
Was as in lengthe, the same quantyte
As was the body erecte, that caused it
And therfore by the shadowe he toke his wit
That Phebus, whiche ꝑ shone clere & bright
Degrees was fourty clomben of hyght
And for that daye, as in latitude
It was ten of the clocke, he gan conclude
And sodaynly he plight hys horse aboute.
¶ Lordynges (ꝙ he) I warne you al ꝑ route
The fourthe parte of thys day is gon
Now for the loue of God and of sayne John
Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may (day
Lordinges the tyme wasteth both night and
And stealeth from vs, what prively slepyng
And what through negligẽce in our wakyng
As doth ꝑ streme, that turneth neuer ayayn
Descendynge fro the mountayne in to ꝑ playn
Wel can Senecke, and many a philosophre
By wayling tyme, more than golde in cofre
For losse of catel may recouered be
But losse of tyme shendeth vs (ꝙ he)
It wol not come ayen without en drede
No more than wol Walkyns maydenhede
Whan she hath loste it in her wantonnesse
Let vs not mowlen thus in ydelnesse.
Hyr man of lawe (ꝙ he) so haue I blys
Tel vs a tale anon, as forwarde is
Ye ben submytted, through your free assent
To stonden in this case at my iugement
Aquyteth you now of your behestes
Than haue ye done your deuer at the leste.
¶ Hoste (ꝙ he) de pardeux ie assent
To breke forwarde is not myn entent
Byheste is dette, and I wol holde fayne
Al my behest, I can no better fayne
For such law as a mã yeueth an other wight
He shulde hym selue vsen it by ryght
Thus wol our text: But natheles certayne
I can right now no thrifty tale fayne
That Chaucer (though he can but lewdly
On metres and in rymyng craftely)
Hath sayd hem, in suche Englyshe as he can
Of olde tyme, as knoweth many a man
And yf he hane not sayd hem leue brother
In one booke, he hath sayd hem in another
For he hath told of louers vp and doun
Mo than Ouyde made of mencioun
In his Epystles, that ben ful olde
what shuld I telle hem, syth̃en they ben tolde
In youthe he made of syre al a lone
And syth̃en he hath spoken of euerychone
These noble wyues, and these louers eke
who so that wol hys large volume seke
Cleped the seyntes lyues of Cupyde
There may he se the large woundes wyde
Of Lucrece, and of Babylon Thisbe
The swerde of Dydo for the false Enee
The tre of Phillis for her Demophoon
The playnte of Deianire, and of Hermyon
Of Adriana, and of Hypsiphile
The barayne yle stondyng in the see
That dreynte Leandre for his Hero
The teares of Heleyn, and eke the wo
Of Brises, and of Laodomia
The cruelte of quene Medea
The lytel chyldren hongyng by the hals
For the Jason, that was of loue so fals
Of Hypermistra, Penelope, and Alceste
Your wyfehode be clenenderh with the beste
But certaynly no worde ne writeth he
Of thylke wycked ensample of Canace
That loued her owne brother synfully
Of suche cursed stories I say fy
Out vpon Tyro Appollonius
Howe that the cursed kyng Antyochus
Byraste his doughter of her maydenhede
That is so horrible a tale for to rede
whan he her dyde vpon the pauement
And therfore he of ful auisement
Nolde neuer write in von of hys sermons
Of suche vnkynde abhominations
Ne I ne wol non rehearse, yef that I may
But of my tale howe that I don thys day
Me were lothe be lykened douties
To Muses, that men clepeth Pierides
Methamorphoseos wotte what I mene
But natheles I recche not a bene
Though I come after hym with hawbake
I speke in prose, and let hym rymes make
And with that worde, he with a sobre chere
Began hys tale, as ye shullen after here.

There endeth the man of lawes Prologue, and here followeth hys tale.

O Hare,



Hateful harme, condycyō of pouert.
With thurst, with colde, with hūgre so cōfounded
To asken helpe, the shameth in thyn hert
Ifthou non aske, yt nede thou art so wounded
that very nede vnwrapeth al thy woundes hid
Naugry thyn heed, thou must for indygence
Or stele, or begge, or borowe thy dispence

Thou blamest Crist, and sayest ful bytterly
He misdepartyth rychesse temporall
Thy neyghbour thou wytest synfully
And sayest, lyen haste to lytel, & he hath all
Parfay, sayst thou, somtyme he reken shall
whan that his tayle shal brenne in glede
For he nought helpeth nedeful in her nede

Herken what is the sentence of the wyse
Better is to dyen, than to haue indygence
Thyne selfe neygbour wol the dispyse
Ifthou be poore, farwel thy reuerence
Yet of the wyse man take thys sentence
Al the dayes, poore men ben wycke
Beware therfore or thou come to the pycke

Ifthou be poore, thy brother hateth the
And al thy frendes fleeth fro the, alas
O ryche marchaūtes ful of wele be ye
O noble prudent folke, as in this cas
Your bagges ben not fylde with ambes aas
But with sise synke, þ renneth for your chaūce
At Chrystenmasse, mery may ye daunce

Ye seken londe & see for your wynnynges
As wyse folke ye knowen al the state
Of reignes, ye ben fathers of tydynges
And tales, bothe of peace and debate
I was right nowe of tales desolate
Nere that a marchant, goode is many a yere
Nye taught a tale, whyche ye shullen here.

IN Surrey whylō dwelte a company
Of chapmen ryche, and therto sad and trewe
That wyde were senten her spicery
Clothes of golde, and satten ryche of hewe
Her chaffare was so thryfty and so newe
That euery wight hath deyntie to chaffare
Wyth hem, and eke to sellen hem her ware

Nowe fel it, that the maysters of that sorte
Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende
Were it for chapmanhode, or for disporte
Nō other messangere wold they thyder sende
But comē hem selfe to Rome, thys is þ ende
And in suche place as thought hē auaūtage
For her entent, they taken her herbygage

Sojourned ha these marchaūtes in ỳ towñ
Certayne tyme, as fel to her pleasaunce
But so byfel, that the excellent renowne
Of the emperours doughter dame Custaūce
Reported was, with euery circumstaunce
Unto these surreyn marchaūtes, in such wise
Fro day to day, as I shal you deuyse

This was the comen voyce of euery man
Our emperour of Rome, god hym se
A doughter hath, ỳ sythen the worlde began
To reke as wel her goodnesse as her beaute
Nas neuer such a nother as is she
I pray to god in honour her susteene
And wolde she were of al Europe the queene

In her is hye beautie, without pride
Youthe, without grenhede or folye
To al her werkes vertu is her gyde
Humblesse hath slayne in her al tyrannye
She is a myrrour of al curtesye
Her herte is very chambre of holynesse
Her honde ministre of fredom and almesse

And al this voyce was soth, as god is trewe
But now to our purpose let vs turne agayn
These marchātes han dō fret her ships newe
And whā they han this blisful mayden seyn
Home to Surrey ben they went ageyn
And done her nedes, as they han done yore
And lyuen in welth, I can say no more.

Now fel it, ỳ these marchātes stode in grace
Of hym that was the Soudon of Surrye
For whā ỳ they came frō any straunge place
He wolde of hys benygne curtesye
Make hem good chere, & besyly aspye
Tydynges of sondry realmes for to lere
The wonders that they might seen or here

Amonge other thynges specially
These marchaūtes haue hym told of dame
Custaunce
So gret noblesse, in ernest ententyfly
That this Soudō hath caught so great plesāce
To han her fygure in hys remembraunce
And al his luste, and al hys besy cure
Was for to loue her, whyle his lyfe may dure

Paraventure in that ylke large boke
Which that cleped is the heuē, writtren was
With sterres, whan that he his byrthe toke
That he for loue shulde han his dethe, alas
For in the sterres, clerer than is the glas
Is written god wot, who so coude it rede
The dethe of euery man withouten drede

In sterres many a wynter there byfore
was written the deth of Hector & of Achilles
Of Pompey and Julius, or they were bore
The ryse of Thebes, and of Hercules
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The dethe but mens wyttes ben so dull
That no wyght can wel rede it at the full

This Soudō for his prime counsayle sent
And shortly of thys mater for to pace
He hath to hem declared al hys entent
And said he certain, but ỳ he might haue grace
To haue Custaūce, withyn a lytel space (as
He nas but deed, and charged hem to hye
To shapen for his lyfe some remedye.

Diuers men, diuersly they sayden
The argument they casten vp and doun
Many a subtell reason forthe they layden
They spoken of Magike, and abusyoun
But finally, as in conclusyoun
They can not seen in that non auauntage
Ne in non other way, saue in maryage

Than sawe they therin such difficulte
By way of reason, to speke al playne
Because that there was such diuersyte
Betwene her bothe lawes, that they sayne
They trow ỳ no christen prince wolde fayne
wedden hys chylde vnder our lawes swete
That vs was taught, by Mahounde our pro
phete

And he answerde: rather than I lese
Custaunce, I wol be christen doutels
I mote ben hers, I may non other chese
I pray you holde your argumentes in pes
Saueth my lyfe, and be not recheles
To geten her, that hath my lyfe in cure
For in thys wo, I may not long endure

what nedeth greater delatacyon
I say, by treatie and ambassadrye
And by the popes mediacion
And al the chirche, and al the chevalry
That in destruction of Maumetry
And in encrease of Christes lawe dere
They ben accorded, as ye shal here.

Howe

Howe that the Soudon and his baronage
And al hys lieges, shulde christned be
And he shal han Custaunce in mariage
And certayne golde, I not what quantite
And her to fynde sufficient surete
The same accord was swore on eyther syde
Now fayre Custaūce, almyghty god ỹ gyde

Howe wolde som men waiten, as I gesse
That I shulde tellen al the purueyaunce
That the Emperour of hys noblesse
Hath shapen for hys daughter dame Custāce
Wel may men knowe, that so great ordynāce
May no man tellen in a lytell clause
As was arayde for so hyghe a cause

Bishoppes ben shapē with her for to wende
Lordes and ladies, and knightes of renown
And other folke ynowe, this is the ende
And notifyed is throughout the towr
That euery wight, with great deuocioun
Shulde pray Christ, that he this mariage
Receyue in gree, and spede this voyage

The day is come of her departyng
I say the woful day natural is come
That there may be no lengre tarieng
But forwarde they hem dresse al and some
Custaunce, that with sorowe is al ouercome
Ful pale arist, and dresseth her to wende
For wel she sey, there is non other ende

Alas, what wonder is it though she wept
That shal be sent to a straunge nation
Fro frendes, that so tenderly her kept
And to be bounden vnder subiectyon
Of one, she knoweth not his condityon
Husbondes ben al good and han ben yore
That knowen wyues, I dare say no more

Father (she said) thy wretched child Custāce
Thy yonge daughter, fostred vp so softe
And ye my mother, my soueraigne pleasance
Ouer al thyng out take Christ on lofte)
Custaunce your child her cōmaundeth ofte
Vnto your grace: for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I neuer more se you with eye

Alas, vnto the Barbary nation
I must anon sithen it is your wyl
But Christ that starfe for our redemption
So yeue me grace, his hestes to fulfyl
I wretched womā no force though I spyll
Women are borne to thraldom and penaūce
And to ben vnder mannes gouernaunce

I trow at Troy, whā Thurus brake ỹ wal
Of Ilyon, ne whan brente was Thebes cite
Ne Rome for the harme of Hanybal
That Romayns hath inequeshed tymes thre
Nas herde, suche tendre wepyng for pyte
As was in the chambre for her departyng
But forth she mote, wheder she wepe or syng

O fyrst mouyng cruel firmament
With thy diurnal swegh, that croudest aye
And hurtlest al fro Est to Occident
That naturally wolde holde another way
Thy croudyng set the heuen in suche array
At the begynnyng of this feirs voyage
That cruel Mars hath slayne this mariage

O infortunate assendent tortuous
Of whiche the lorde is helpeles fal, alas
Out of hys angle, into his derkest house
O Mars, O cruel, as in thys cas
O feble Mone, vnhappy ben thy pas
Thou knittest ỹ there thou nart not receyued
Ther thou were wel, fro thēce art ỹ waryed

Imprudent emperour of Rome, alas
was there no philosofer in thy towne
In no tyme bette than other in suche cas
Of voiage, is there none electiowne
Namely to folke of hye condition
Nat whan a rote is of a byrthe ynowe
Alas we ben to leude, or to slowe

To ship is brought this woful faire mayd
Solempnely, with euery circumstaunce
Nowe Ihesu Christ be with you al (she sayd)
Ther nys no more, but fare wel fair Custāce
She payneth her to make good countenaūce
And forthe I let her sayle in this manere
And tourne I wol agayne to my matere.

Explicit prima pars:
et sequitur pars
secunda.



he mother of the Soudon,
wel of vices
[illegible]
playn[illegible]
howe he [illegible]iete hys olde sa
crifyces

And right anon,she for her counsayle sent
And they ben comen,to know what she ment
And whan assembled was thys folke in fere
She sette her down,& sayd,as ye shal here.

Lordes(quod she)ye knowen euerichone
Howe that my sonne is in poynt to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron
Yeuen by goddes messangere Machomete
But one auowe to grete God I here
The lyfe shal rather out of my body stert
Or Machometes lawe go out of my hert

What shulde vs tyden of thys newe lawe
But thraldome to our bodies and penaunce
And afterwarde in hel to ben drawe
For we reneyed Mahounde our creaunce
But lordes,wol ye make assurannce
As I shal say,assentyng to my loze
And I shal make vs safe for euermoze

They sworen,and assenten euery man
To lyue with her and dye,and by her stonde
And eueriche in the best wise that he can
To strengthen her,shal his frendes fonde
And she hath this empyre take in honde
Whiche ye shal here,that I shal deuise
And to hem al she spake in thys wyse.

we shul vs fyrst fayne,christendom to take
Colde water shal not greue vs but a lyte
And I shal suche a reuel and a feest make
That as I trowe,I shal the Soudon quyte
For tho his wife be christenedneuer so white
She shal haue nede to washe away the rede
Though she a fonte ful of water vp her lede

O Soudonnesse,roote of iniquite
Virago,thou Hymylam the secounde
O serpent vnder femenynete
Lyke to the serpent depe in hell yhounde
O fayned woman,al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence,thzoug thy malyce
Is bredde in the,a nest of euery vyce.

O Sathan enuyous,syn thylke day
That thou were chased from our herytage
Wel knewest thou to women the olde way
Thou madest Eue to bryng vs in seruage
Thou wolte fordone this christen maryage
Thyne instrument,so welaway the whyle
Makest thou of wome,wha thou wolt begile

This Soudonesse,who I blame & wery
Let priuely her counsayle gon her way
what shulde I in this tale lenger tarye
She rydeth to the Soudon on a day
And sayd hym,that she wolde renye her lay
And christendom of prestes hondes fonge
Repentyng her,she hethen was so longe

Besechyng hym,to done her that honour
That she might haue y Christe folke to feste
To plesen hem,I wol don my labour
The Soudo sayde,I wol don at your heste
And kneling,thanketh her of that requeste
So glad he was,he nyst not what to say
She kist her sonne,& home she goth her way

Arryued ben these christen folke to londe
In Surre,with a great solempne route
And hastely this Soudon sent his sonde
Fyrst to his mother,& al the reygne aboute
And sayd,hys wyfe was comen out of doute
And prayde hem for to ryden ayenst y quene
The honoure of hys reygne for to sustene

Great was the prese,& ryche was the raye
Of Surreyens,and Romayns ymette yfere
The mother of the Soudon,ryche and gay
Receyueth her with al glad chere
As any mother myght her doughter dere
Vnto the nerr eyte there beside
A softe pace solempnely they ryde

Nought trowe I,the triumphe of Julyus
Of whiche that Lucan maketh suche a bost
was royaller,and more curious
Than was thassemblyng of this blisful host
But this Scorpyon,this wycked gost
The sodonnesse,for al her flatterynge
Cast vnder al thys,ful mortally to styng

The Soudon cometh himselfe sone after
So ryally,that wonder is to tel (this
He welcometh her wyth moche ioye & blys
And thus in myrthe & ioye I let hem dwel
The fruyte of euery tale is for to tel

When tyme come, mē thought it for the best
That reuel stynte, and men gone to rest

The tyme come, this olde Soudōnesse
Ordened hath ꝑ feest, of whych I tolde
And to the feest, chrysten folke hem dresse
In general, both yonge and olde
There may men feest and ryalte beholde
And deyntes mo then I can deuyse
But al to dere they boughten it or they ryse

O Soudon, woo ꝑ euer thou art successour
To worldly blysse, spronge with bytternesse
The ende of ioye, of our worldly labour
Wo occupyeth the ende of our gladnesse
Herken thys counsayle, for thy sekernesse
Upon thy glad day haue thou in mynde
The vnware wo or harm, ꝑ cometh behynde

For shortly for to tellen at a worde
The Soudon, and the chrysten euerychone
Ben al to hewe, and stycked at the borde
But it were onely dame Custaunce alone
Thys olde Soudonnesse, curled crone
Hath with her fredes done thys cursed dede
For she her selfe wolde al the countre lede

Ne there was surreyn none ꝑ was cōuerted
That of the cōsayle of the Soudon wot
That he nas al to brawe, er he asserted
And Custaunce han they taken anone forthot
And in a shyppe al stereneless (god wot)
They han her set, and bydden her lerne to sayle
Out of Surrey ayenwarde to Itayle

In certayne tresour, that she thyder ladde
And soth to sayne, vytayle great plente
They han her geuen, and clothes eke she had
And forth she sayled in the salte se
O my custaunce ful of benignite
O Emperours yonge doughter dere
He that is lorde of fortune, be thy stere

She blesseth her, and with ful pytous voyce
Unto the croise of Chryst, tho sayd she
O clere, o welful auter, holy croice
Reed of the lambes blode, ful of pyte
That washe ꝑ worlde fro ꝑ olde vnquite
Me fro the fende, and fro hys clawe kepe
That dare that I shal drenchen in the depe.

Victorious tree, protection of trewe
That onely worthy were for to bere
The kynge of heuē, with hys woundes newe
The whyte lambe, that hurt was with a spere
Fermere of fendes, out of hym and here
On whych thy lymmes faythfully extenden
Me kepe, and yeue me myght my lyfe to amēde

Yeares and dayes fleteth thys creature
Thrughout ꝑ see of Grece, vnto the strayte
Of Marocke, as it was her auenture
O, many a sory mele may she bayte
After her death ful ofte may she wayte
Or that the wylde waues wolde her dryue
Unto the place there she shulde aryue.

Men might aske, why she was not slayne
Eke at the feest, who myght her body saue?
I answere to that demaunde agayne
Who saued Daniel in that horrible caue?
Ther euery wyght, were he maister er knaue
Was wyth the lyon frette or he asserte
No wyght but god, that he bare in his herte

God wyl to shewe his wonderful myracle
In her, for she shuld serue his mighty werkes
Crist that is to euery harme tryacle
By certayne meanes often, as knowē clerkes
Doth thynge for certayne ende, ꝑ ful derke is
To mans wytte, that for our ignoraunce
Ne can not knowe hys prudent purueyance

Now syth she was not at ꝑ feest yslawe
Who kepeth her fro the drenchyng in the see?
Who kepte Jonas in the fysches mawe
Tyl he was spouted out at Neuuee?
wel may mē knowe, it was no wight but he
That kepe ꝑ people Israhel from drenchyng
Wyth drye fete, thrugh the see passyng

Who hath the foure spirites of ꝑ tempeste
That power had, both to anoye lande and see
Both north and south, and also west and este
Anoyeth neither see ne lande ne tre
Soothly the cōmaunder therof was he
That fro ꝑ tempest aye thys woman kepte
As wel when she woke as when she slepte

Wher might this womā mete and drynke haue
Thre yere and more, how lasteth her vitayle
Who fedde the Egipcyan Marye in the caue
Or in deserte none but Crist sans fayle
Fyue thousand folk it was as gret marueile

With lones fyue and fyftes two to lede
God sent his foyson at her great nede.

She driueth forthe in to our Occian
Throughout the wylde see, tyl at the laste
Under an holde, that nempne I ne can
Fer in Northumberlõde, the wawe her caste
And in the sande her shyppe stycked so faste
That thence nolde it not of al a tyde
The wyl of Christ was þ she shuld ther byde

The constable of the castel downe is fare
To seen this wreche, & al the shyp he sought
And sonde this wery woman ful of care
He founde also the treloure that she brought
In her langage, mercy she besought
The lyfe out of her body for to twyn
Her to deliuer of wo that she was in

A maner latyn corrupte was her speche
But algates therby was she vnderstonde
The constable, whã hym lyst no lenger seche
This wofull woman brought he to londe
She kneleth downe, & thãketh goddes sonde
But what she was, she wolde no man sey
For foule ne fayre, though she shulde dey

She sayd she was so mased in the see
That she forgate her mynde, by her trouthe
The constable of her hath so great pyte
And eke his wyfe, that they wepen for routh
She was so dyligent with houten slouthe
To serue and plese eueryche in that place
That al her louen, that loken in her face

The cõstable, & dame Hermegilde his wyfe
Were payenims, and that cõtre euery where
But Hermegylde loued her right as her lyfe
And Custaunce hath so long sojourned there
In oraisons, with many a bytter tere
Tyl Jesu hath conuerted through his grace
Dame Hermegylde, cõstablesse of that place.

In al that londe durst no christen route
Al christen folke ben fledde from that cõtre
Through payenims, that conquered al about
The plages of the North, by londe and see
To wales fledde the christianyte
Of olde Bretons, dwellyng in that Ile
There was her refuge, for the meane whyle

But yet nas ther neuer christe hyrdõ so exiled
That there nas some in her priuete
Honoured Christe, & heathen folke begyled
And nye the castel suche there dwellen thre
That one of hym was blynde, & might not se
But it were with thylke eyen of his mynde
With whiche men seen, after they ben blynde

Bright was the sonne, as in somers day
For whiche the constable, and his wyfe also
And Custaunce, han taken the ryght way
Towarde the see, a furlong waye or two
To playen, and to romen to and fro
And in her walke, thre blynde men they met
Croked and olde, with eyen faste yshette

In þ name of Christ, cryed this blind hyrdõ
Dame hermegylde, yeue me syght agayne
This lady ware a frayde of the soun
Lest that her husbonde, shortly for to sayne
Wold her for Jesus Christes lore haue slayne
Til Custãce made her bolde, & bad her werch
The wyl of Christ, as doughter of his cherch

The cõstable wore abashed of that syght
And sayd: what amounteth al this fare
Custance answerde: syr it is Christes myght
That helpeth folke out of the fendes snare
And forthforth she gan our lawe declare
That she the constable, er that it was eue
Cõuerted hath, & on Christ made hym beleue

This cõstable was nothing lord of this place
Of which I spekc, ther he Custaunce fonde
But kept it strongly, many a wynter space
Under Alla, kyng of Northumberlonde
That was ful wyse, & worthy of his honde
Agayne the Scottes, as men may wel here
But toucne I wol agayne to my matere.

Satha, that euer his wayteth to begyle
Sawe of Custaunce al her perfectioun
And cast anon how he might quyte her wyle
And made a yong knight, þ dwelt in the toun
Loue her so hotte, of foule affectioun
That verily, hym thought þ he shulde spyll
But he of her ones might haue his wyll

He woeth her, but it auayled nought
She wolde do no synne by no wey
And for dispyte, he compassed in his thought
To maken her on shamfull dethe to dey
He wayteth whan the constable is awey

And pry-

And priuely on a nyght he crepte
In to Hermegildes chambre whyle she slept

Wery forwaked in her orisons
Slepeth Custaunce and Hermegylde also
This knight, through Sathans temptacions
Al softely is to the bedde ygo
And cut the throte of Hermegylde a two
And layde ꝑ blody knyfe by dame Custaúce
And went his waye, ther god yeue him mys-
(chaunce.
Home after cometh ꝑ cõstable home agayne
And eke Alla, that kynge was of that lande
And fawe hys wyfe dyspytously yslayne
For whych he wepte and wronge his hande
And in the bedde the blody knyfe he fonde
By dame Custáce, alas what myght she say
For very wo, her wytte was al away

To kynge Alla was tolde al this myschaúce
And eke the tyme, & where, & in what wyse
That in a shyppe was fonden this Custaúce
As here before ye han herde me deuyse
The kynges herte for pyte gan aryse
When he fawe so benygne a creature
Fal in hyscase and in myfaduenture

For as ꝑ lãbe towarde hys death is brought
So stante this innocent before the kyng
This fals knight, ꝑ hath this treso wrought
Berefth her on hãd, ꝑ she hath don this thing
But natheleffe there was great mourning
Amonge the people, & fayd they can not gesse
That she had done so great a wyckednesse

For they han sene her euer so vertuouse
And louyng Hermegylde, right as her lyfe
Of this bare witnesse euerych in that house
Saue he that Hermegyld slow wt hys knyfe
This gētle kyng hath caught a great motyfe
Of this wytnes, & thought he wold enquere
Deper in thys case, the trouth to lere

Alas Custaunce, thou hast no champion
Ne fyght canst thou not, so welaway
But he that starfe for our redemption
And bonde Sathan, & yet lyth there he laye
So be thy stronge champion thys daye
For but ꝑ Christ on the myracle kyth
Without gylt thou shalt be slayne aswyth

She set her doune on knees, & thus she sayde
Immortal god, that sauedest Susanne
Fro false blame, and thou mercyful mayde
Marye I meane, doughter to saynt Anne
Before whose childe angels synge Osanne
ꝑ I be gyltelesse of thys felonye
My socoure be, or els shal I dye

Haue ye not sene sometyme a pale face
(Amonge a prees) of hym that hath ben lad
Toward his deth, wher as him get no grace
And such a colour in his face hath had
That mẽ might know his face ꝑ was bystad
Amonges al the faces in that route
So standeth Custaunce, & loketh her aboute

O quenes, lyuynge in prosperite
Duchesses, and ye ladyes euerychone
Haue some routh on her aduersite
An emperours doughter stante alone
She hath no wyst, to whõ to make hermone
O bloode royal, that stondeth in this drede
Farre ben thy frendes at thy great nede

Thys Alla kyng, hath such compassioun
As gentle herte is ful of pyte
That from hys eyen ran the water doun
Bowe hastely do fetre a booke, quod he
And ꝑ thys knyght wol fwere, how that he
Thys woman slowe, yet wol we vs auyse
Whom that we wol shal ben our iustyse

A breton boke, wrytten wyth Euangeles
Was fette, and theron he fwore anone
She gylty was, and in the meane whyles
An hande hym smote on the necke bone
That downe he fyl atones, as a stone
And both hys eyen blast out of hys face
In syght of euery body in that place

A voyce was herde, in generall audience
That fayd: Thou hast dysclandred gyltles
The doughter of holy chyrch, in hye presence
Thus hast thou done, & yet I holde my pees
Of this marualye, agast was al the prees
As dysmayde folke, they stoden euerychone
For drede of wreche, saue Custaunce alone

Great was ꝑ drede, & eke the repentaúce
Of hem that hadden wrought suspection
Upon thys sely innocent Custaunce
And for thys myracle, in conclusion
And by Custaunces mediation

The

The kynge, and many another in that place
Converted was, thanked be goddes grace

This false knighte was slayn for his untrouthe
By iudgement of Alla hastely
And yet Custáce, had of his death grete routh
And after this, Jesus of hys mercy
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
Thys holy mayde, that is so bryght & shene
And thus hath christ made Custáce a quene

But who was wofull, yf I shulde not lye
Of thys weddyng- but Donegilde & no mo
The kynges mother, full of tyranny
Her thought her cursed herte brast a two
She wolde not her sonne had do so
Her thought a despyte, that he shulde take
So straunge a creature vnto hys make

We lyst not of the chaffe ne of the stree
Make so longe a tale, as of the corne
what shulde I tel of the royalte
Of ỳ mariage, or whych course goth beforne
who bloweth in a trompe or in an horne
The frute of euery tale is for to saye
They eaten and dronken, daunce and playe

They gon to bedde, as it was skyl & ryght
For though ỳ wyues ben ful holy thynges
They wnst take in pacience anyght
Such maner necessaries, as ben pleasynges
To folke that han wedded hem with rynges
And lay a lytel her holynesse asyde
As for the tyme, it may none other betyde

On her he gatte a man chylde anone
And to a bysshoppe, and to hys constable eke
He toke hys wyfe to kepe, when he is gone
To Scotlandwarde, hys fo men for to seke
Now fayre Custáce, ỳ is so humble & meke
So longe is gone wyth chylde tyl that styl
She hathe her chábre, abyding Chrystes wyl

The tyme is come, a man chylde she bare
Mauricius at fontstone they hym calle
This constable doth forth come a messanger
And wrote to hys kynge, ỳ cleped was Alle
Howe that hys bysshul tydynge is byfal
And other tydynges nedeful for to say
He taketh the letter, & forth he goth his way

Thys messanger to done hys auauntage
Vnto the kynges mother rydeth ryght
And salueth her ful fayre in hys langage
Madame (quod he) ye maye be glad & blythe
And thanketh god an hundred thousand sythe
My lady quene hath chylde, wythoute doute
To ioye and blysse of all thys reygne aboute

Lo here the letters sealed of thys thynge
That I mote beare, in al the hast I may
yf ye wol ought vnto your sonne the kynge
I am your seruaunt both nyght and day
Donegilde answerde, as at thys tyme nay
But here I wol al nyght thou take thy reste
To morowe wol I say the what my leste

This messáger dróke sadly both ale & wyne
And stolen were hys letters prively
Out of hys bore, whyle he slepte as a swyne
And counterfeted was ful subtelly
Another letter, wrought ful synfully
Vnto the kynge directe of thys matere
Fro hys constable, as ye shal after here

The letter spake, the quene delyuered was
Of so horrible a fendlyche creature
That in the castel none so hardy was
That any whyle durst therin endure
The mother was an elfe by auenture
Icome, by charmes or by sorcery
And euery wyght hateth her company

Wo was this kyng, whe he ỳ letter had seen
But to no wyght he tolde hys sorowes sore
But wyth hys owne honde he wrote ageyn
welcome the sonde of Crist for euermore
To me, that am newe lerned in hys lore
Lorde, welcome be thy lust & thy pleasaunce
My lust I put al in thyne ordynaunce

Kepeth this childe, al be it foule or fayre
And eke my wyfe, vnto myne home comyng
Crist when hym lyst, may sende me an heyre
More agreable then thys, to my lykynge
Thys letter he sealeth prively weepynge
wbych to the messangere was taken sone
And forth he goth, ther nys no more to done

O messanger, fulfylled of dronkennesse
Strónge is thy breth, the lymmes faltrē aye
And thou bewrayest al secretnesse
Thy mynde is lorne, thou iangelyst as a iaye
Thy face is turned in a newe araye

There

There dronkenneſſe reygneth in any coute
There nys no coũſayle hyd wythoute doute

O Donegild, I ne haue no engliſh digne
Unto thy malyce, and thy tyrannye
And therfore to the fende I the reſygne
Let hym endyte of thy traytrye
Fye mannyſhe fye: O nay by god I lye
Fye fendyſhe ſpirit for I dare wel tri
Though thou here walke, thy ſpirit is in hel

This meſſãger cometh fro ꝑ kynge agayne
And at the kynges mothers houſe he lyght
And he was of thys meſſanger ful fayne
And pleaſed hym in al that euer he myght
He dronke, and wel hys gyrdel vnder pyght
He ſlepeth, and he snorteth in hys gyſe
Al nyght, tyl the ſonne gan aryſe

Eke were hys letters ſtolen euerychon
And counterfeted letters in thys wyſe:
The kynge cõmaundeth hys conſtable anon
Up payne of hongyng on an hye iewyſe
That he ne ſhulde ſuffren in no wyſe
Cuſtaunce, wythin hys reaume for to abyde
Thre dayes, and a quarter of a tyde

But in the ſame ſhyppe, as he her ſonde
Her and her yonge ſonne, and al her gere
He ſhulde croude, and put fro the londe
And charge her, that she neuer eft come there
O Cuſtaunce, wel may thy goſte haue fere
And ſlepynge in thy dreame, ben in penaũce
When Donegylde, cal al thys ordynaunce

This meſſãger on ꝑ morow when he woke
Unto the caſtel halte the nerre way.
And to the Conſtable he the letter toke
And when that he thys pytous letter ſey
Ful ofte he ſayd (alas) and welaway
Lord Chriſt (q he) how may this world en-
So ful of ſynne is many a creature (dure

O myghty god, yf that it be thy wyl
Syn thou art rygh̃tful iuge, how may it be
That thou wylt ſuffer innocence to ſpyl
And wycked folke to raygne in proſperite
O good cuſtaunce (alas) ſo wo is me
That I mote be thy tourmẽtour, or els dey
On ſhames death, ther nys none other wey

Wepen both yonge and olde in that place
when that the kynge thys curſed letter ſent
And Cuſtaunce wyth a deadly pale face
The fourth day, towarde her ſhyp ſhe went
But natheleſſe, ſhe taketh in good entent
The wyl of Chriſt, and kneleyng in the ſtronde
She ſayd Lorde, aye welcome be thy ſonde

He that me kepte fro that falſe blame
whyles I was on the lande amonge you
He can me kepe fro harme, and eke fro ſhame
In the ſalte ſee, al though I ſe not howe
As ſtronge as euer he was, he is nowe
In hym truſte I, and in hys mother dere
That is to me, my ſayle and eke my ſtere

Her lytel chylde lay weppynge in her arme
And kneelynge pytouſly, to hym ſhe ſayde
Peace lytel ſonne, I wol do the none harme
wyth that her kercher of her heed ſhe brayde
And ouer hys lytel eyen ſhe it layde
And in her arme, ſhe lulleth it ful faſte
And into heuen her eyen vp ſhe caſte

Mother (quod ſhe) and mayde bright Mary
Soth is, that through wemans eggement
Mankinde was lorne, and dampned aye to dye
For whych thy chylde was on croſſe ꝑcut
Thy blyſful eyen ſawe al hys turment
Then is there no compariſon betwene
Thy wo, and any wo that man may ſuſtene

Thou ſe thy chylde ꝓyne byfore thyn eyen
And yet now lyueth my lytel chylde parfaye
Nowe lady bryght, to whom al woful cryen
Thou glory of womanheed, thou fayre may
Thou hauen of refute, bryght ſterre of day
Rewe on my chylde, of thy gentylneſſe
That reweſt on euery ruful in dyſtreſſe

O lytel childe (alas) what is thy gylte
That neuer wroughteſt ſynne, as yet parde
why wol thyne hard father haue the ſpylte
O mercy: dere conſtable (quod ſhe)
As let me lytel chylde dwel here wyth the
And yf thou darſt not ſauen hym fro blame
So lyſſe hym ones in hys fathers name

Therwyth ſhe loketh backward to ꝑ lõde
And ſayd: farewel huſbande couthleſſe
And vp ſhe ryſt and walked downe the ſtronde
Toward the ſhyp, her foloweth al the preeſs
And euer ſhe ꝓyeth her child to holde his peeſs

And

And taketh her lene, and with an holy entent
She blesseth her, and into ꝑ shyppe she went

Victayled was the shippe, it is no drede
Habundantly, for her full long space
And other necessaries that shulde nede
She had inowe, heried be goddes grace
For wynde ꝙ weder, almighty god purchace
And bringe her home, I can no better say
But in the see, she dryueth forthe her way

Alla the kyng cometh home sone after this
Unto hys castel, of whyche I tolde
And asketh where his wyfe ꝙ hys chylde is
The constable gan aboute hys herte to colde
And playnly al the maner hym tolde
As ye han herde, I can tel it no better
And sheweth the kyng his seale and his letters

And sayd: lorde as ye commaunded me
Up payne of dethe, so haue I done certayne
This messanger tormented was tyl he
Wyst beknowen, and tel plat and playne
Fro night to night, in what place he had lain
And thus by wytte and subtel enquerying
Imagened was, by who this harm gan spring

The kynde was knowē ꝑ the letter wrote
And al the venym of this cursed dede
But in what wyse, certaynly I note
The effecte is this, that Alla out of drede
His mother slow, that may men playnly rede
For that the traytoure was to her allegaunce
Thus endeth old Donegild with mischaunce

The sorowe that this Alla nyght ꝙ day
Maketh for hys childe, and for hys wyfe also
There is no tonge that it tel may
But nowe wol I to Custaunce go
That fleteth in the see, in payne and wo
Fyue yere and more, as lyked Cristes sonde
Or that her shyppe aproched vnto londe

Under an hethen castel, at the laste
Of whiche the name in my text I not fynde
Custaunce and eke her chylde the see vp caste
Almighty god, that saueth al mankynde
Haue on Custaūce, ꝙ on her chyld some mynde
That fallen is in hethen honde efte sone
In poynte to spyl, as I shal tel you sone

Downe fro the castel cometh ther many a
(wight
To gauren on this shyppe, ꝙ on Custaunce
But shortly fro the castel on a nyght
The lordes stewarde, god yeue him mischaū
A theef, that had renyed our creaunce
Came into the shyp alone, and sayd he sholde
Her lemman be, whether she wolde or nolde

Wo was the wretched woman tho bygō
Her childe cryed, and she cryed pitously
But shyftful Pallas holpe her anon
For with her strogiyng, wel and mightyly
The theef fel ouer the borde, al sodaynly
And in the see he drenched for vengaunce
And thus hath crist vnwemed kept Custace

O foule lust of luxure, lo thyn ende
Nat onely that thou fayntest mans mynde
But verily, thou wolt his body shende
The ende of thy werke, or of thy lustes blynd
Is complayning: how many one may men fynd
That not for werke somtyme, but for thentent
To don this synne, ben eyther slayne or shent

How may this worke woman haue ꝑ stregth
Her to defende agayns this renegate
O Goliath, vnmesurable of length
Howe myght Dauid make the so mate
So yonge, and of armure so desolate
Howe durst he loke on thy dredful face
Wel may men se, it is but goddes grace.

Who yaue Judith courage or hardynesse
To sleen hym Holofernes in hys tente
And to delyuer out of wretchydnesse
The people of God: I say for this entent
That eyght as God, spyrite and vygore sente
To hem, and saued hem out of mischaunce
So sent he myght and vigore to Custaunce

Forth goth her shyp thorow ꝑ narow mouth
Of Gibalter and forth Medyterane
Somtyme weste, ꝙ somtyme northe ꝙ south
And somtyme este, ful many a wery daye
Tyl Chrystes mother, yblessed be she aye
Hath shapen, through her endelesse goodnesse
To make an ende of al her bysynesse.

Explicit secunda pars:
et sequitur pars
tertia.
(∴)

Nowe

NOw let vs stynte of Custance but a throwe
And spekе we of the Romayne Emperoure
That out of Surrey hath by letters knowe
The slaughter of christen folke, & dishonoure
Done to hys doughter, by a false traytour
I meane the cursed wycked Soudonnesse
That at the feest, let sleen bothe more & lesse

For whiche this Emperour hath sent anon
hys senatour, with royal ordinaunce
And other lordes, god wote many one
On Surreyns to done hye vengeaunce
They brennè, sleen, & bringè hem to mischãce
ful many a day: but shortly this is the ende
Homward to Rome, they shapè hem to wende

This senatour repayreth with victorye
To Rome warde, sayling ful royally
And met the shyp dryving, as sayth the storye
In whiche Custaunce sate ful pitously
Nothyng knewe he what she was ne why
She was in suche array, ne she nolde sey
Of her estate, thoug she shulde dey

He bringeth her to Rome, and to his wyfe
He yaue her, and her yonge sonne also
And with the senatour she ladde her lyfe
Thus can our lady bryng out of wo
Woful Custaunce, and many another mo
And longe tyme dwelled she in that place
In holy werkes euer, as was her grace.

The senatours wyfe her aunte was
But for al that, she knewe her neuer the more
I wol no longer tarye in thys caas
But to kyng Alla, of whiche I spake of yore
That for hys wyfe wepeth, and syketh sore
I wol retourne, and let I wyl Custaunce
Under the senatours gouernaunce.

Kyng Alla, which y had his mother slayne
Upon a day fel in suche repentaunce
That yf I shortly tellen al shal, & playne
To Rome he cometh, to receyue hys penaūce
And putten hym in the churches ordinaunce
In hye & in lowe, and Jesu Christ besought
Forgeue hys wycked werkes, y he wrought
(born

The fame anon through Rome town is
Howe Alla kyng shal come on pilgrymage
By herbegers that wenten hym byforne
For whiche the senatour, as was vsage
Rode hym agayne, and many of hys lynage
As wel to shewen hys hye magnificence
As to done any kyng reuerence.

Great chere dothe thys noble senatour
To kyng Alla, and he to hym also
Euerych of hem dothe other great honour
And so byfel, that on a day or two
This senatour is to kyng Alla go
To feest, and shortly yf I shal not lye
Custaunces sonne went in hys compayne
(stance

Som mè wold sayne, at y requeste of Cu-
This senatour had ladde thys childe to feest
I may not tellen euery circumstaunce
Be as be may, there was he at leste
But sothe it is, right at hys mothers heste
Byforn Alla, duryng the meate space
The childe stode, lokyng in the kynges face
(wonder

This Alla kyng, hath of thys child great
And to the senatour he sayd anon
whose is y fayre child, that standeth yonder
I not, quod he by god and by saynt John
A mother he hath, but father hath he non
That I of wote but shortly in a stounde
He tolde Alla, howe the childe was founde
But god wote, quod this senatour also)
So vertuous a lyuer in my lyfe
Ne sawe I neuer as she, ne herde of mo
Of worldly woman, mayden, ne of wyfe
I dare wel say, she had leuer a knyfe
Through her brest, than ben a womā wycke
There is no mā couthe bryng her to y pricke

Nowe was the childe as lyke Custaunce
As possyble is, a creature for to be
This Alla hath the face in remembraunce
Of Dame Custaunce, and theron mused he
yeue that the childes mother were aught she
That is his wyfe, and priuely he sygh
And spedde hym fro the table, that he myght

Parfay he thought, y fantome is in myn
I ought deme of skylful iugement (heed
That in the salte see my wyfe is deed
And afterwarde he made hys argument
What wot I, yf Christ hath hyther sent
My wyfe by see, as wel as he her sente
To my countrey, fro thens y she was wente

And after anone, home with the senatour
Goeth Alla, for to se thys wonder chaunce
Thys senatour doth Alla great honour
And hastely he sente after Custaunce
But trusteth wel, her lust not to daunce
when she wyst wherfore was that sonde
Unneth upon her fete myght she stonde.

Whe Alla saw his wife, fayre he her gret
And wept, that it was rough for to se
For at the fyrst loke he on her set
He knewe wel verely that it was she
And for sorowe, as dombe stante as a tre
So was her herte shet in dystresse
when she remembreth hys vnkyndnesse

Twyse she sowned in her owne syght
He weepeth and hym recuseth pytously
Nowe god (q he) and hys hallowes bryght
So wysly on my soule haue mercy
That of your harme, as gyltelesse am I
As is Maurice my sonne, so lyke your face
Els the fende me fetch out of thys place.

Longe was þ sobbyng, & the bytter payne
Or that her wofull herte myght cese
Great was the pyte to here hem complayne
Though which plaintes gan her wo encrese
I pray you al my labour to release
I may not tel her wo, fyl to morowe
I am so wery to speake of her sorowe

But fynally, when that þ soth is wyste
That Alla gyltelesse was of her wo
I trowe an hundred tymes ben they kyste
And such a blysse is there betwyxt hem two
That saue the ioye, that lasteth euermo
There is no lyke, that any creature
Hath seyen or shal, whyle þ world may dure

Tho prayed she her husbande meekely
In releasynge of her pytous payne
That he wolde praye her father specially
That of hys maiesty he wolde enclyne
To vouchsafe somdaye with hym to dyne
So he prayed hym ese, he shulde by no waye
Unto her father no worde of her to saye

Some mē wold say, þ the child Maurice
Doth thys message vnto thys Emperour
But as I gesse, Alla was not so nyce
To hym that was of so soueraygne honour
As he that is of chrysten folke the flour
Sent any chylde but it is bette to deme
He went hym selfe, and so it may wel seme

Thys Emperour graunted gentelly
To come to dyner as he hym besought
That al was redy he loked besely
Upon this child, & an his doughter thought
Alla goeth to hys ynne, and as hym ought
Arrayde for thys feest in euery wyse
As farforth as hys connynge may suffyse

The morowe came, & Alla gan hym dresse
And eke his wyfe, the Emperour for to mete
And forth they ryde in ioye and in gladnesse
And when she sawe her father in the strete
She lyght a downe and falleth hym to fete
Father (q she) your yonge chylde Custaunce
Is nowe ful clene out of your remembraunce

I am your doughter Custaunce (q she)
That whylom ye han sent into Surrye
It am I father that in the salte see
was put alone, and dampned for to dye
Nowe good father, I you mercy crye
Sende me no more into hethennesse
But thanken my lorde here of hys kyndnesse

who can the pytous ioye tellen al
Betwyxt hem thre, syn they be thus ymette
But of my tale make an ende I shal
The day goth fast, I wol no longer lette
Thys glad folke to dyner hem sette
In ioye and blysse, at meate I let hem dwell
A thousande folde welmore then I can tel

This child Maurys was sythen emperour
Made by the pope, and lyued chrystenly
To Chrystes churche he dyd great honour
But I let al thys storye passen by
Of Custaunce is my tale specially
In olde Romayne gestes men may fynde
Maurys lyfe, I beare it not in myndе

This kynge Alla, when he hys tyme sey
With thys Custaunce, his holy wyfe so swete
To Englande ben they come the ryght wey
where as they lyue in ioye and in quyete
But lyst wel whyle it lasteth I you hete
Ioye of this worlde, for tyme wol not abyde
Fro daye to nyght, it chaungeth as the tyde

Who

Who lyued euer in ſuch delyte a daye
That he ne meued eyther in conſcience
Or ire, or tallent of ſome kyn affraye
Enuye or pryde, or paſſion, or offence?
I ne ſaye but for thys ende, a thys ſentence
That lytel whyle in loye or in pleaſaunce
Laſteth the blyſſe of Alla wyth Cuſtaunce

For deth, ꝑ taketh of hye a lowe his rente
when paſſed was a yere, euen as I geſſe
Out of thys worlde kynge Alla he hente
For whom Cuſtaūce hath ful gret heuynelle
Nowe let vs prayen god hys ſoule bleſſe
And dame Cuſtaunce, fynally to ſay
Towarde ꝑ towne of Rome goeth her way

To Rome is come thys holy creature
And fyndeth her father hole and ſounde
Nowe is ſhe ſkaped al her auenture
And when that ſhe her father hath yfounde
Downe on her knees goeth ſhe to grounde
wepynge for tenderneſſe in herte blythe
She heryeth god an hūdred thouſand ſythe

In vertue and holy almeſdede
They lyuen al, and neuer a ſonder wende
Tyl death departen hem, thys lyfe they lede
And farewel nowe wel, my tale is at an ende
Now Jeſu chriſt, ꝑ of his myght may ſende
Joye after wo, gouerne vs in hys grace
And kepe vs al, that ben in thys place

¶ Thus endeth the man of lawes tale, and here folowe th the Squyers prologue.

Our hooſt on hys ſhroppes ſtode anone
And ſayd: good men herkeneth euerychone
Thys was a thryfty tale for the nones
Syr parych preeſt (quod he) for goddes bones
Tel vs a tale, as was thy forwarde yore
I ſe wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can moche good, by goddes dignite
The parſon hym anſwerde, Benedicite
what eyleth the man, ſo ſynfully to ſwere?
¶ Our hoſt anſwerd, O Jenkyn be ye there
Now good mē (quod our hoſt) herkeneth to me
I ſmel a loller in the wynde (quod he)
Abydeth for goddes dygne paſſion
For we ſhall haue a predication
Thys loller here, wol preechen vs ſomwhat.
¶ Nay by my fathers ſoule, that ſhal he nat
Sayd the Squyer, here ſhal he not preche
Here ſhal he no goſpel glo ſe ne teche
we leueth al in the great god (quod he)
He wolde ſowen ſome dyſſyculte
Or ſprynge cockel in our clene corne
And therfore hooſt, I warne the byforne
My tolly body, ſhal a tale tel
And I ſhal ryngen you ſo mery a bel
That I ſhal waken al thys compayne
But it ſhal not ben of philoſofye
Ne phiſyke, ne termes queynte of lawe
There is but lytel latyn in my mawe

¶ Here endeth the Squyers prologue, and hereafter folo weth hys tale.



At Sarra, in the lāde
of Tartary
There dwelt a kynge
that warred Surry
Thurgh which ther di
ed many a doughty mā
Thys noble kynge
was called Cambuscā
Whych in hys tyme
was of so great renoun
That there nas no where, in no regioun
So excellent a lorde in al thynge
Hym lacked naught that longed to a kynge
As of the secte, of whych he was borne
He kept hys laye, to whych he was sworne
And therto he was hardy, wyse, and ryche
And pytous and iuste alwaye ylyche
Trewe of his worde, benygne & honorable
Of hys corage, as any centre stable
Yonge, freshe, & stronge, in armes desyrous
As any bacheler of al hys hous
A fayre person he was, and fortunate
And kept alwaye so royal astate
That there nas no where such another man
This noble kyng, this tartre, this Cābuscā
Had two sonnes by Elpheta hys wyfe
Of whych the eldest hyght Algarsyfe
That other was cleped Camballo.
And doughter had thys worthy kynge also
That yongest was, and hyght Canace
But for to tel you al her beaute
It lyeth not in my tonge ne in my conynge
I dare not undertake so hye a thynge
Myne Englyshe eke is insufficient
It muste be a rethor excellent
That couth his colours longynge for þ arte
Yf he shulde dyscryue here euery parte
I am none such I muste speake as I can
And so befel, that thys Cambuscan
Hath ewenty wynter borne hys drademe
As he was wonte, fro yere to yere I deme
He let the feest of hys natiuite
Done crye throughout Sarra hys cyte
The laste dyus of Marche, after the yere
Phebus the sonne full ioly was and clere
For he was nye hys exaltation
In Martes face, and in hys mansion
In Aries, the colerike, the hote sygne
Ful lusty was the wether and benygne
For whych the foules, agaynst þ sonne shene

wha

what for the season, and the yonge grene
Ful loude songe her affections
Hem semed han getten hem protections
Ayen the swerde of wynter kene and colde.
¶ Tiys Cãbuscã, of which I haue you tolde
In royal vestementes, syt on hys deys
with dyademe, ful hye in hys paleys
And helde hys feest so royal and so ryche
That in thys worlde nas there none it lyche
Of whych, yf I shall tel of al the array
Then wolde it occupye a somners day
And eke it nedeth not to deuyse
At euery course, the ordre of her seruyce
I wol not tel of her straunge sewes
Ne of her swannes, ne of her heronsewes
Eke in that lande, as tellen knyghtes olde
Ther is some meate, that is ful dainty holde
That in thys lande men recche of it but smal
Ther is no man that maye reporten all.
I wyl not tarye you, for it is tyme
And for it is no fruite, but losse of tyme
Unto my fyrst purpose I wol haue recourse
¶ And so befel that after the thyrde course
whyle that thys kyng syt thus in his noblay
Herkenyng his minstralles her thinges play
Before hym at hys borde deliciously
In at the halle dore al sodenly
There come a knyght on a stede of brasse
And in hys honde a brode myrrour of glasse
Upon hys thombe he had of golde a ryng
And by hys syde a naked swerde hongyng
And vp he rydeth to the hye borde
In al the halle ne was there spoke a worde
For merueyle of ỳ knyght hym to beholde
Ful besely they waryen yonge and olde
¶ This straunge knyght ỳ come thus sodenly
Al armed saue hys heed, ful royally
Salued kynge and quene, and lordes al
By ordre, as they syttен in the hall
with so hye reuerence and obeysaunce
As wel in speche as in countenaunce
That Gawyn with hys olde curtesye
Though he come ayen out of fayrye
Ne coude him not amende of no worde
And after this, before the hye borde
He with a manly voyce sayd his message
After the forme vsed in his langage
without vyce of syllable or of letter
And for his tale shulde seme the better
Accordant to his wordes was his chere
As techeth arte of speche hem that it lere
Al be that I can not sowne his style
Ne I ne can not clymben so hye a style
Yet saye I thus, as to my conen entente
Thus much amounteth al that euer he mente
yf it so be that I haue it in my mynde
¶ He sayd: The kynge of Araby and of Ynde
My liege lorde, on thys solempne day
Saluyeth you, as he best can and may
And sendeth you, in honoure of your feest
By me that am redy at your heest
Thys stede of brasse, that easely and wel
Can in the space of a daye natureel
This is to say, in foure and twenty houres
where so ye lyst, in drought or in shoures
Beren your body into euery place
Into whych your herte wylleth to pace
without wem of you, through foule or faire
Or yf ye lyst to fleen in the eyre
As doth an Egle, when hym lyst to sore
This same stede shal beare you euermore
withouten harme, tyl ye ben there you leste
Though that ye slepen on his backe and reste
And turne agayn with ỳ writhyng of a pyn
He that it wrought coude ful many a gyn
He wayted ful many a constellation
Or he had done this operatyon
And knew ful many a scale and many a bonde.
This myrrour eke ỳ I haue in myne honde
Hath such a myght that men may in it se
when there shal fallen any aduersite
Unto your reygne, or to your selfe also
And openly se, who is your frende and foe
And ouer al thys, yf any lady bryght
Hath set her herte on any mynere wyght
yf he be false, she shal the treason se
Hys newe loue, and al hys sutyltе
So openly that there shal nothyng hyde
Wherfore agayne this lusty sommer tyde
Thys myrrour and thys ryng, that ye maye se
He hath sente to my lady Canace
Your excellent doughter that is here
¶ The vertue of thys ryng, yf ye woll here
Is thys, that yf she lyst it for to were
Upon her thombe, or in her purse it bere
There is no foule, that fleeth vnder heuen
That she ne shal vnderstande hys steuen
And knowe hys meanynge openly and playne
And answere hym in hys langage agayne
And euery gras that groweth vpon rote
She shal wel know, and whom it wol do bote
Al be hys woundes neuer so depe and wyde
¶ This naked swerde, ỳ hangeth by my syde
Such vertue hath, ỳ what man so ye smyte

Throughout his armure it wol kerue & byte
were it as thycke as a braunched oke
And what mā that is wouñded wyth ꝑ stroke
Shal neuer be hole, tyl that you lyst of grace
To stroken him with ꝑ platte in thylke place
There he is hurte, thys is as moche to sayne
Ye mote wyth the platte swerde agayne
Stroken hym in the wounde, & it wol close
Thys is very soth wythouten glose
It fayleth not, whyles it is in your holde.
And whē this knyȝt hath thus his tale tolde
He rydeth out of the halle, & downe he lyght
Hys stede, whych that shone as sonne bryght
Stante in the courte styl as any stone
The knyght is into chambre ladde anone
He is vnarmed, and to the meate ysette
And al that harneys bylonge hym fette
This is to sayne, the swerd & eke ꝑ myrrour
Al borne was into the hye tour
wyth certayne officers ordeyned therfore
And to Canace the ryngе is bore
Solemnely, there she sat at the table
But sekerly wythout any fable
The horse of brasse, ꝑ may not be remeued
It stante, as it were to the grounde ygrieued
There may no man out of the place it dryue
For none engyne, or wyndlas, or polyue
And cause why, for they can not the crafte
And therfore in the place they han it lafte
Tyl ꝑ the knyȝt hath taught hem ꝑ maniere
To voyden hym, as ye shal after here.
¶ Great was ꝑ prees, that swarmed to & fro
To gauren on the horse, that stander so
For it so hye was, & so brode and longe
So wel proporcioned for to ben stronge
Right as it were a stede of Lumbardye
Therwyth so horsly, and so quycke of eye
As it a gentle courser of Apoyle were
For certes, fro hys tayle to hys ere
Nature ne arte coude hym not amende
In no degre, as al the people wende
But euermore her moste wonder was
Howe that it coulde gon, and was of bras
It was of fayrie, as the people semed
Dyuers folke dyuersly they demed
As many heedes, as many wyttes there ben
They murmure, as doth a swarme of been
And made of sondry fantesyes
Reherssynge of the olde poetryes
And sayden it was lyke the Pegase
The horse that had wynges for to flee
Other els it was the Grekes horse Synon
That brought Troye to destruccion
As men in thys olde bokes rede.
Myne herte (ꝑ one) is euermore in drede
I trowe some men of armes ben therin
That shapen hem thys cyte for to wyn
It were right good, ꝑ such thynges were
In other rowned to his felow low (know
And sayd he lyed, for it is rather lyke
An apparence made by some magyke
As iogglours playen at these feastes grete
Of sondry thoughtes, thus they iangle & trete
As leude people demeth comenly
Of thynges that ben made more subtelly
Then they can in her leudnesse comprehende
They demen gladly to the badder ende.
And some of them wondren on ꝑ myrrour
That borne was vp to the mayster toure
Howe men myght in it such thynges se.
And other answerd, certes it myght wel be
Naturally by compositcyons
Of angels and of dye reflections
And sayden in Rome was suche on
They spoken of Alocen and Vitulon
And Aristote, that wryteth in her lyues
Of queynte myrrours, and of prospectiues
As knowen they that han her bokes herde.
And other folke han wondred on ꝑ swerde
That wolde perce through euery thynge
And fel in speche of Telophus the kynge
And of Achylles for hys queynte spere
For he couth wyth it heale and dere
Right in such wyse as mē may wt the swerde
Of which right now ye haue your selue herd
They spoken of sondry hardyng of metal
And spoken of medycynis eke wythal
And how, and when it shulde hardened be
Whych is vnknowe algate to me.
¶ Tho speake they of Canaces ryngе
And sayden al, that suche a wonder thynge
Of crafte of rynges herde they neuer non
Save that Moyses, and kynge Salomon
Had a name of conynynge of such arte
Thus saven the people, & drawē hem aparte
But natheles, some sayden that it was
Wonder to maken of ferne asshen, glas
And yet is glas not lyke asshen of ferne
But so they han knowen it so ferne
Therfore they lesen her ialgyng & her wōder
As fore wondren some on cause of thōder
On ebbe & fluddе, on gossomer, and on myste
And on al thynge, tyl the cause is wyste.
Thus iangien they, and demē and deuyse

Tyl

Tyl that the kyng gan fro hys boorde aryse.
¶ Phebus hath lefte the angle meridional
And yet ascendyng was the beest royal
The gentle Lyon with his Alduran
Whan that this tartre kyng Cambuscan
Roose from his boorde, there as he sate ful hye
Before hym gothe the loude mynstralcye
Tyl he came to hys chambre of parementes
There as they sownen diuers instrumentes
That is lyke an heuen for to here
Nowe daunceth lusty Venus chyldre dere
For in the fysshe her lady sate ful hye
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.
¶ This noble kyng is sette vpon hys trone
This straunge knyght is set to hym ful sone
And in the daunce he gothe with Canace
Here is the reuel and the iolyte
That is not able a dul man to deuyse
He must han knowe loue and her seruyse
And ben a festlyche man, as freshe as May
That shulde you deuyse suche araye.
¶ who coulde you tellen the forme of daunces
So wrouth and so fresh countenaunces
Suche subtyll lokynges and dissimulinges
For drede of ialouse mens apperceyuynges
No man but Lancelot, and he is deed
Therfore I passe ouer al this lusty heed
I say no more but in this iolynesse
Sete hem tyl men to supper dresse.
¶ The steward bydeth spyces for to hye
And eke the wyne, in al this melodye
The vshers and the squyers ben ygone
The spyces and the wyne is comen anone
They eten & dronke, & whā this had an ende
Vnto the temple, as reason was, they wende
The seruyce is done, they soupen al by day
What nedeth it to reherse her array
Eche man wot wel, that at a kynges feest
Is plenty, to the moste and to the leest
And deyntes mo, than ben in my knowynge.
And after supper gothe this noble kynge
To seen this horse of brasse, with al his route
Of lordes and of ladyes hym aboute
Such wondrig ther was on his hors of bras
That sythen the great siege of Troye was
There as men wondred on an horse also
Ne was there such a wondrung, as was tho
But fynally, the kyng asketh the knyght
The vertue of hys horse and the myght
And prayde hym to tellen of his gouernaunce.
The horse anon gan to teppe and daunce
whā ỳ this knyght layde honde on hys rayne
And sayd, syr there is no more to sayne
But whan you lyste to ryden any where
Ye mote tryll a pyn, stante in hys ere
whiche I shal tel you betwene vs two
Ye mote nempne hym to what place also
Or to what contree you lyst to ryde
And whan ye come there you lyste abyde
Bydde hym discende, and tryll a nother pyn
For therin lyeth the effecte of al the gyn
And he wol downe discende, & don your wyl
And in that place he wol abyde styl
Though al ỳ world had the contrary swore
He shal not thens be ythrowe ne yborne
Or yf you lyst bydde hym thens gon
Tryl thys pyn, and he wol vanysshe anon
Out of the syght of euery maner wyght
And come ayen, be it day or nyght
whan that you lyst to clepen hem agayne
In suche a gyse, as I shal to you sayne
Betwyxt you and me, and that ful sone
Ryde whā you lyst ther nis no more to done
¶ Enfourmed whā ỳ kyng was of ỳ knyght
And hath conceyued in his wytte aright
The maner and the forme of al thys thyng
Ful glad and ful blythe, the noble kyng
Repayreth to hys reuel as before
The bridel is in to the toure yborne
And kept amonge his iewels lefe and dere
The horse vanysshed, I not in what maniere
Out of her syght, ye get no more of me
But thus I lete in lust and iolyte
This Cambyscan, hys lordes festyng
Tyl wel nye the day began to spryng.

¶ Explicit prima pars et sequitur pars secunda.

The noise of dignesse the slepe
Gan on hem wynke, & bad hem take kepe
That myrth, dronke, & labour wol haue reste
And with a galping mouthe hem al he keste
And sayd it was tyme to lye adoun
For bloode was in hys bonyuacioun
Chereysseth blode, natures frende (q he)
They thanke hym galpyng, by two by thre
And euery wight gan drawe hem to his reste
As slepe hem bade, they toke it for the beste.
Her dremes shul not now ben told for me
Ful were her heedes of fumosyte
That causeth dremes, of whyche ther is no charge
They slepen, tyl it was pryme large

The moste parte, but it were Canace
She was ful mesurable, as women be
For of her father had she take her leue
To gon to rest, sone after it was eue
Her lyst not appalled for to be
Nor on the morowe, vnlestlyche for to se
And slept her fyrst slepe, and awoke
For suche a ioy she in her herte toke
Both of her queynt Ryng, & of her myrrour
That twenty tymes she chaunged her colour
And in her slepe, eyght for impressyon
Of her myrrour, she had a vysyon
Wherfore, or the sonne vp gan glyde
She cleped her maistresses her beside
And sayd, her luste for to aryse.
¶ These olde women, that ben gladly wyse
As is her maystresse, answerde her anon
And sayd: madame, whither wol ye gon
Thus erly, for folke ben al in reste.
¶ I wol (quod she aryse) for me leste
No lenger for to slepe, but walken aboute.
Her maystresse cleped wome a great route
And vp they ryse, wel ten or twelue
Vp ryseth fresshe Canace her selue
As ioly and bright, as the yonge sonne
That in the Ram is four degrees vp ronne
No hyther was he, whan she redy was
And forthe she walketh an easye paas
Arrayed after the lusty season sote
Lightly for to playen, & walken on sote
Nought but fyue or sixe of her meyne
And in a trenche, fer in the parke gothe she.
¶ The vapour, whiche ꝑ fro the erth glode
Maketh the sonne to seme ruddy and brode
But nathelesse, it was so fayre a syght
That it made al her hertes for to syght
What for the season, and for the morowenyng
And for the foules that she herde synge
For right anon, she wyste what they ment
Right by her songe, and knewe al her entent
¶ The knotte why, that euery tale is tolde
If it be taryed tyl luste be colde
Of hem that han it herkened after yore
The sauour passeth, euer lenger the more
For fulsomnesse of prolixite
And by the same reason thynketh me
I shulde vnto the same knot condiscende
And make of her walkyng sone an ende.
¶ Amydde a tree, for drye as whyte as chalke
As Canace was playeng in her walke
There sate a faucon ouer her heed ful hye
That with a pytous voyce gan to crye
That al the wodde resowned of her cry
And beaten had her selfe so pytously
With bothe her wynges, tyl the reed blode
Ran endelonge the tree, there as she stode
And euer in one, she cryed and shright
And with her becke, her seluen so she pyght
That there nas Tygre ne cruel beste
That dwelleth in wodde, eyther in forreste
That nolde haue wept, yf that they wepe coude
For sorowe of her, she shright alway so loude
For there nas neuer yet man on lyue
If that he couthe a faucon wel descryue
That herde of suche another of fayrenesse
As wel of plumage, as of gentylnesse
Of shappe, of al that might reckened be
A faucon peregryn than semed she
Of ferrende londe, & euermore as she stoode
She swouned now & nowe, for lacke of blood
Tyl wel ny is she fal fro the tree.
¶ This fayre kynges doughter, this Canace
That on her fynger bare the queynte ryng
Thrugh which she vnderstod wel euery thyng
That any foule may in hys leden sayne
And couthe answere hym in his leden agayne
Hath vnderstande, what this faucon seyde
And wel ny for routhe almost she deyde
And to the tre she gothe ful hastely
And on this faucon loketh ful pytously
And holde her lappe abrod, for wel she wyste
The faucon muste fallen from the twyste
Whan ꝑ she swouned nere, for lacke of blood
A longe whyle to wayten there she stoode
Tyl at the laste she spake in this manere
Vnto the hauke, as ye shalen after here.
¶ What is the cause, yf it be for to tell
That ye ben in this furyal payne of hell
Quod Canace, vnto this hauke aboue
Is this for sorowe of dethe, or losse of loue?
For as I trowe, these ben causes two
That causen most a gentyl herte wo
Of other harme it nedeth not to speke
For ye vpon your selfe you wreke
Whiche prouyth wel, that eyther ire or drede
Mote ben enchesson of your cruell dede
Syn that I se none other wyght you chace
For the loue of god, so doth your selfe grace
Or what may be your helpe, for west or est
Ne sawe I neuer er now, no bryde ne best
That farde with hym selue so pytously
Ye slee me with your sorowe verily
I haue of you so great compassioun
For goddes loue come fro the tre adowne

And

And as I am a kynges doughter trewe
If that I verily the cause knewe
Of youre disease, yf it lay in my myght
I wolde amende it, certes or it be nyght
As wysely helpe me great god of kynde
And herbes shal I right ynowe fynde
To hele with youre hurtes hastely
Tho thought this faucon yet more spitously
Than euer she dyd, & fell to grounde anone
And lyeth a swoune deed as is a stone
Tyl Canace hath in her lappe take
Unto the tyme she gan of swoune awake
And after that she of swoune gan abreyde
Right in her haukes leden thus she sayde
That pite renneth soone in gentyl herte
(Feling his semblable nature in paynes smerte)
As proued al day, as men may se
As wel by werke as by authorite
For gentil hert kepeth gentilnesse
I se wel, that ye haue of my distresse
Campaspon, my fayre Canace
Of very womanly benignyte,
That nature in your principles hath sette
But for none hope for to fare the bette
But for to obey vnto your hert free
And for to make other beware by me
As by the whelpe, chastised is the lyon
Right for that cause, and for that conclusyon
While that I haue a leyser and a space
Myne harm I wol confessen or I pace
And euer while that one her sorowe tolde
That other wepte, as she to water wolde
Tyl that the faucon badde her to be styl
And with a sike, thus she sayd her tyl.
(There I was bredde, alas that tike day
And fostred in a roche of marble gray
So tenderly, that nothyng eyleth me
I ne wist not what was aduersyte
Tyl I coude flye, ful hye vnder the skye
There dweite a Tercelet me fast by
That semed wel of al gentylnesse
Al were he ful of treason and of falsnesse
It was so wrapped vnder humble chere
And vnder hewe of trouth, & in such manere
Under pleasaunce, and vnder busy payne
That no wight coud haue wende he could fayn
So depe in grayne he dyed his colours
Right as a serpent hideth him vnder flours
Tyl he may se hys tyme for to byte
Right so this God of loues ypocrite
Dothe so hys seremones and obeysaunce
With his dissimulynge, & fayre allembiaunce
That so weneth vnto gentilnesse of loue
As in a tombe is al the fayre aboue
And vnder the cors, such as ye wote
Such was this ypocrite colde and hote
And in this wyse he serued his entent
That saue the fende, non wist what he ment
Tyl he so long had weped and complayned
And many a yere hys seruyce to me playned
Tyl that myn hert, to pitous and to nyce
Al innocent of hys cruel malyce
For ferde of hys dethe, as thought me
Upon hys othes and hys sureté
Graunted hym loue, vpon this condition
That euermore myn honour and my renoun
Were saued, bothe preuy and apert
This is to say, that after hys desert
I yaue hym al myn hert and all my thought
God wote, and in other wyse nought
And toke his hert in chaunge of myn for aye
But sothe is sayd, gone sythen many a day
A trewe wight and a thefe thynketh not one
And whan he sawe the thyng so fer ygone
That I graunted hym fully my loue
In such a gyse, as I haue sayd aboue
And yeuen hym my trewe hert as fre
As he swore he yaf his hert to me
Anon this Tygre, ful of doublenesse
Fyll on hys knees with so deuout humblesse
With hye reuerence, and eke by his chere
So lyke a gentyl louer, as of manere
So rauyshed, as it semed for ioye
That neuer Troylus ne Paris of Troy
Jason certes, ne non other man
Syn Lamet was, that alderfyrst began
To louen two, as writen folke beforne
Ne neuer sythen Adam was borne
Ne couthe man by twenty thousande parte
Counterfete the sophymes of hys arte
Ne were worthy to vnbocle hys galoche
Ther doublenesse or fayny ng shulde approche
Ne so couth thanke a wight, as he dyd me
His maner was an heuen for to se
Tyl any woman, were she neuer so wyse
So paynteth he hys chere poynt deuyse
As wel hys wordes, as hys countenaunce
And I so loued hym for hys obeysaunce
And for the trouthe that I demed in his hert
That yf so were, that any thyng hym smert
Al were it neuer so lyte, and I it wyst
Me thought I felel dethe at my herte twyst
And shortly, so ferforth this thyng went
That my wyl was his wylles instrument

That

That is to say, my wil obeyed his wyl
In al thyng, as ferre as reason fyl
Kepyng the boundes of my worshyp euer
Ne neuer had I thyng so lefe ne so leuer
As hym god wote, ne neuer shal no mo
This last lenger than a yere or two
That I supposed of hym nothyng but good.
But fynally, thus at the last it stode
That fortune wolde that he moste twyn
Out of that place, whiche that I was in
where me was wo, it is no questyon
I can not make of it discriptyon
For o thyng dare I tel boldely
I knowe what the payne of dethe is therby
Suche harm I felte, that he ne might beleue
So on a day of me he toke hys leue
So sorowfully eke, that I wende verely
That he had felte as moche harm as I
Whā that I herde him speke, and saw his hewe
But natheles, I thought he was so trewe
And eke that he repaire shulde agayne
within a lytel whyle sothe to sayne
And reason wolde eke, that he must go
For hys honour, as ofte happeth so
That I made vertue of necessite
And toke it wel, sythe it must nedes be
As I best might, I hidde fro hym my sorow
And toke him by ye hond, sein John to borow
And sayd thus: lo I am yours al
Both suche as I haue ben to you and shal
What he answerde, it nedeth not reherce
Who can sayn bet than he, who can do wers
Whan he had al wel ysaid, than hath he done
Therfore behoueth hym a longe spone
That shal eten with a fende, thus herd I say
So at the last he mote forth hys way
And forthe he fleeth til he come there him lest
Whan it come hym to purpose for to rest
I trowe he had thylke tent in mynde
That al thyng repayring to hys kynde
Gladeth him self, thus sayn men as I gesse
Ben louen of kynde newfangelnesse
As briddes don, that men in cages fede
For though ye nyght and day take of hem hede
And strawe her cage fayre and softe as silke
And gyue hem sugre, hony, breed and mylke
Yet right anon as hys doze is vppe
He with his fete wold spoune adown his cup
And to the wood he wolde, and wormes eate
So newfangled ben they of her meate
And louen newelties of proper kynde
No gentylnesse of blode may hem bynde
So ferde thys Tercelet, alas the day
Tho he were gentel borne, fresshe and gaye
And goodly for to se, and humble and free
He sawe vpon a tyme a kyte flee
And sodaynly he loued this kyte so
That al hys loue is clene fro me goo
And hath hys trouthe falsed in this wyse
Thus hathe the kyte my loue in her seruyce
And I am lorne without remedy.
And with ye worde this faucon gan to crye
And swouned ofte in Canaces barme
Great was ye sorowe for that haukes harme
That Canace, and all her women made
They nyst how they might her faucon glade
But Canace home beareth here in her lappe
And softely in playsters gan her wrappe
There as she yt her becke had hurt her selue
Nowe can not Canace but herbes delue
Out of the grounde and make salues newe
Of herbes precious and fyne of hewe
To helen with the hauke fro day to nyght
Whe dothe her besynesse, and all her might
And by her beddes heed she made a mewe
And couered it with velouettes blewe
In sygne of trouthe, that is in women sene
And al without ye mewe is peynted grene
In which were peynted al these false foules
As ben these tydefes, tercelettes, and owles
Ryght for dispyte were peynted hem besyde
Pyes on hem for to crye and chyde
Thys leue I Canace her hauke kepynge
I wol nomore as nowe speke of her tynge
Tyl it come efte to purpos for to sayn
How that this faucon gate her loue agayn
Repentant, as the storye telleth vs
By mediatyon of Cambalus
The kynges sonne, of whiche I of tolde
But herkneth me I wol my proces holde
To speken of auentures, and of batayls
That yet was neuer herd of so gret marueils
First wol I tel you of Cambuscan
That in hys tyme many a cyte wan
Powe that he wan Theodora to hys wyfe
And after wol I speke of Algarsyfe
For whom ful ofte in great peryl he was
Ne had he ben holpen by the horse of bras
And after wol I speke of Cambalo
That fought in lystes with the brethern two
For Canace, er that he myght her wyn
And there I left, I wol agayn begyn.

Explicit secunda pars.

Apollo whirleth vp his chare so hye
Vyl that the god Mercurius house he slye.

¶ There can be founde no more of this forsayd tale, whiche hath ben sought in dyuers places

¶ Here folowe the wordes of the Marchaunt to the Squyer, and the wordes of the Host to the Marchaunt.

A fayre Squyer, thou hast the wel quyt
And gentelly, I prayse wel thy wyt
Quod the Marchaunt, consyderyng thyne youth
So feelyngly thou spekest I the alouth
As to my dome there is non that is here
Of eloquence, that shalbe thy pere
yf that thou lyue, God gyue the tyght good chaunce
And in vertue sende the perseueraunce
For of thy spekyng I haue great deynte
I haue a sonne, and by the Trinite
I had leuer than twenty pounde worth londe
(Though it nowe were fallen in my honde)
He were a man of suche discrecyon
As that ye beniye on possessyon
But yf a man be vertuous with all
I haue my sonne shrewed, and yet shal
For he to vertue lysteth nat to entende
But for to play at dyse, and to spende
And lese al that he hath, is his vsage
And he had leuer talke with a page
Than to commen with any gentyl wight
where he myght lerne gentelnesse aryght
Strawe for your gentylnesse (q̄ our host)
what marchaunt, pardy wel thou wost
That eche of you mote tellen at the lest
A tale or two, or breken your behest
That know I wel (q̄ the marchāt) certain
I pray you haue me nat in disdayn
Though I to thys mā speke a worde or two
Tel on thy tale withouten wordes mo
Gladly syr host (q̄ he) I wol obey
Unto your wyl, nowe herkeneth what I say
I wol you nat contrary in no wyse
As farre as my wittes may suffyse
I pray to god that it may plesen you
Than wotte I wel, it is good ynow.

¶ Thus ende the wordes of the host and the marchant, and here folowe the Marchauntes prologue.

Wepyng and waylyng, care and other sorowe
I haue knowe, both euyn and eke a morowe
Quod the Marchaunt, and so haue other mo
That wedded be, I trowe that it be so
For wel I wote it fareth so by me
I haue a wyfe, the worst that may be
For though the fende coupled to her were
She wold him ouermatch I dare wel swere
What shulde I reherce in special
Her hygh malyce she is a shrewe at all
There is a longe and a large difference
Betwyxt Griseldes great pacience
And of my wyfe the passyng cruelte
Were I vnbounde, also mote I the
I wolde neuer efte come in the snare
We wedded men lyue in sorowe and care
Assay who so wol, and he shal fynde
That I say forthe, by sayntt Thomas of Inde
As for the more parte, I say nat al
God shelde that it shulde so befal
Ah good syr host, I haue wedded be
These monethes two, and more nat parde
And yet I trowe he that all hys lyfe
Hath wedded be, thoug men hym kyte
In to the hert, ne couthe in no manere
Tel so moche sorowe, as I nowe here
Coude tell, of my wyues cursednesse
Nowe q̄ our host marchant, so god ꝑ blesse
Syn ye be so moche knowe of that arte
Ful hertely I pray you tell vs parte
Gladly quod he, but of myn owne sore
For sory hert I tel may no more.

¶ Here endeth the Marchauntes prologue, and here folowe th̄ hys tale.



Whyló there was dwel-
lyng in Lombardy
A worthy knyght, that
borne was at Pauy
In whiche he lyued in
great prosperyte
And syrty yeare a wy-
feles man was he
And folowed aye hys bodely delyte
On women, there as was his appetyte
As don these foles that ben secu̇leres
And whan that he was past sixty yeres
Were it for holynesse or dotage
I can not sayn, but suche a great corage
Had this knyght to ben a wedded man
That day and nyght he dothe al that he can
To espy, where that he wedded myght be
Prayeng oure lorde to graunten hym that he
Myghten ones knowen of that blysful lyfe
That is betwixt an husbande and hys wyfe
And for to lyuen vnder that holy bonde
With which god fyrst man and womā bonde
Non other lyfe sayd he is worthe a bean
For wedlocke is so easy and so clean
That in this worlde it is a paradise
Thus sayth this olde knyght that is so wyse.
And certaynly, as sothe as god is kyng
To take a wyfe, it is a glorious thyng
And namely whan a man is olde and hore
Than is a wyfe the frute of hys tresore
Than shulde he take a yonge wyfe & a faire
On which he might engendren him an heire
And lede his lyfe in ioye and in solace
where as these bachelers synge alas
whan that they fynden any aduersyte
In loue, whiche nys but childes vanyte
And trewly it sytte wel to be so
That bachelers han ofte payne and wo
On brotel grounde they bylden brotelnesse
They finde freelte, whā they weně sekernesse
They lyue but as birddes or beestes
In lybertē, and vnder nyce arestes
There as a wedded man in hys estate
Lyueth a lyfe blysfully and ordinate
Vnder the yoke of mariage ybounde
wel may his hert in ioye and blisse habounde
For who can be so buxome as a wyfe
who is so trewe and eke so ventyfe
To kepe hym sicke and hole, as is hys make
For wel ne wo she nyl hym nat forsake
She nys nat wery hym to loue and serue
Though that he lye bedrede tyl he sterue
And yet some clerkes sayn, that it is nat so
Of whiche Theophrast is one of tho
what force though Theophrast lyst to lye
He take no wyfe, q he for hylsondrye
As for to spare in housholde thy dispence
A trewe seruaunt doth more diligence
Thy good to kepe, than thyn owne wyfe
For she wol clayme halfe parte al her lyfe

And

And yf that thou be syche, so god me saue
Thy very frendes or a trewe knaue
wol kepe the better, thē the that wayteth aye
After thy good, and hath done many a daye
And yf thou take a wyfe, to the vntrewe
Ful ofte tyme it shal the sore rewe
Thys sentence, and an hundred sithes worse
wryteth thys mā there, god hys bones curse
But take no kepe of suche banyte
Defyeth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.
¶ A wyfe is goddes yefte verely
Al other maner yeftes hardely
As landes, rentes, pasture, or cōmune
Or mouables, al ben yeftes of fortune
That passen, as a shadowe on a wal
But drede not, yf playnly speake I shal
A wyfe wol last and in thyne house endure
wel lenger then the lyst paraunenture
Mariage is a ful great sacrament
He whych hath no wyfe I holde him shent
He lyueth helples, and al desolate
I speake of folke in secular estate.
And herkeneth why, I say not this for nought
A woman is for mannes helpe ywrought
The hye god, whē he had Adam maked
And sawe hym alone belly naked
God of hys great goodnesse sayd than
Let vs make an helpe to thys man
Lyke to hymselfe, and then he made Eue
Here may ye se, and hereby may ye preue
That a wyfe is mannes helpe and comforte
Hys paradyse terrestre and hys disporte
So buxome and so vertuous is she
They must nedes lyue in vnyte
One flesshe they ben, & two soules as I gesse
Not but one herte in wele and in drystresse
A wyfe, ah sayne Mary, benedicite
Howe myght a man haue any aduersite
That hath a wyfe certes I can not sey
The blysse that is betwyxte hem twey
There may no tonge tellen or hert thynke
yf he be poore, she helpeth hym to swynke
She kepeth hys good, & wasteth neuer a del
Al that her husbande lust, her lyketh wel
She sayeth not ones nay, whē he sayth ye
Do thys, sayeth he, al redy syr, sayth she)
¶ O blyssful order of wedlocke precious
Thou arte so mery, and eke so vertuous
And so cōmended, and so approued eke
That euery mā, that halte hym worth a leke
Upon hys bare knees ought all hys lyfe
Thanken god, that hym hath sent a wyfe
Or prayse to god hym for to sende
A wyfe, to last vnto hys lyues ende
For then hys lyfe is sette in sekernesse
He may not be dysceyued, as I gesse
So that he werche after hys wyues rede
Then may he boldely bearen vp hys hede
They ben so trewe and also wyse
For whych, yf thou wolt werchen as ꝑ wyse
Do alway so, as women wol the rede
Lo how that Jacob, as these clerkes rede
By good counsayle of hys mother Rebecke
Bounde the kydde skynne about hys necke
For whych hys fathers benyson he wan
Lo Judyth, as the story tel can
By wyse counsayle goddes people kept
And slewe hym Holofernes whyle he slept
Lo Abigail by counsayle, howe she
Saued her husbande Nabal, when that he
Shulde haue be slayne. And loke Hester also
By good counsayle delyuered out of wo
The people of God, & made hym Mardochee
Of Assuere enhaunsed for to be.
¶ There nys nothynge in gre superlatyfe
(As sayeth Senec) above an humble wyfe
Suffre thy wyues tonge, as Cato byd
She shal cōmande, and thou shalt suffre it
And yet she wol obey of curtesye
A wyfe is keper of thyne husbondrye
wel may the sycke man wayle and wepe
There as there nys no wyfe ꝑ houle to kepe
I warne the, yf wysely thou wylt werche
Loue wel thy wyfe, as christ loueth his chirch
yf thou loue thy selfe, thou louest thy wyfe
No man hateth hys flesshe: but in hys lyfe
He fostreth it, and therfore byd I the
Cherysshe thy wyfe, or thou shalt neuer ithe
Husbande & wyfe, what so men tape or playe
Of worldly folke holde the sekest waye
They be so knit, ther may none harme betide
And namely vpon the wyues syde
For which this January, of which I tolde
Consydred hath in hys dayes olde
The lusty lyfe, the vertuous quiete
That is in mariage hony swete
And for hys frendes on a daye he sent
To tellen hem the effecte of hys entent.
¶ With face sadde, his tale hath he hem tolde
He sayd frendes, I am hoore and olde
And almost (god wot) on the pytte brynke
Upon my soule somwhat must I thynke
I haue my body foly shly dyspended
Blessed be god, it shal ben amended

For I wol ben certayne a wedded man
And that anone in al the hast I can
Unto some mayde, fayre and tender of age
I pray you shapeth for my mariage
All sodeynly, for I wol not abyde
And I wol londen to espye on my syde
To whom I may be wedded hastely
But for as moche as ye ben more then I
Ye shullen rather suche a thynge espyen
Then I, and there me luste best to alyen
But one thing warne I you my frēdes dere
I wol none olde wyfe haue in no manere
She shal not passe fyftene yere certayne
Olde fysshe & ponge fleshe wol I haue fayne
Better is (qd he) a pyke then a pykerel
And better then olde beef is the tender veel
I wol no woman of thyrty wynter age
It nys but beanstrawe and great forage
And eke these olde wedowes (god it wote)
They connen so moche crafte in wades bote
So moche broken harme when hem lyst
That wyth hem shulde I neuer lyue in rest
For sondrye scholes maketh subtel clerkes
A woman of many scholes halfe a clerke is
But certaynly a yonge thynge may men gye
Ryght as men may warme wax vp to hāde: ply
Wherfore I saye you plainly in a clause
I nyl none olde wyfe haue for thys cause
For yf so were that I had myschaunce
And in her couth haue no pleasaunce
Then shulde I lede my lyfe in auoutry
And so streyght to the deuel when I dye
Ne chyldren shulde I none vpon her geten
Yet had I leuer houndes had me eten
Then that myne heritage shulde fal
In straunge handes: and thus I tel you al
I dote not, I wote the cause why
Men shulde wedden: & forthermore wot I
There speaketh many a man of mariage
That wot nomore of this thē doth my page
For wherfor men shulde take a wyfe
Yf he may not lyuen chaste hys lyfe
Take hym a wyfe wyth great deuotion
Bycause of lefful procreation
Of chyldren, to the honoure of god aboue
And not only for paramour or for loue
And for they shulden lechery eschewe
And yelde her dettes when that it is dewe
Or for that eche man shulde helpen other
In myschefe, as a syster shulde the brother
And lyue in chastite ful heuenly
But syrs (by your leaue) that am not I
For god be thanked, I dare make auaunt
I fele my lymmes hole and sufficiaunt
To done al that a man belongeth to
I wote my selfe best what I may do
Though I be hore, I fare as doth a tre
That blossometh er that fruite ywoxe be
The blossomed tre is neyther dye ne deed
I fele no where hore but on my heed
Myne herte and my lymmes bene as greene
As laurel is through the yere to seene
And sythen that ye haue herd al myn entent
I pray you to my wyll ye wol assent
Dyuers men dyuersly hym tolde
Of mariage many ensamples olde
Some blameth it, some prayseth it certayne
But at the last, shortely for to tellen
(As al daye falleth altercacion
Betwyxt frendes in dysputacion)
There fel a stryfe betwyxt hys brethren two
Of whych that one was cleped Placebo
Justynus soothly called was that other
Placebo sayd: O January brother
Ful lytel nede han ye my lorde so dere
Counsayle to axe of any that is here
But that ye ben so ful of sapience
That you ne lyketh for your hye prudence
To dayne fro the worde of Salomon
This worde sayth he vnto euerychone
Worke al thynge by counsayle, thus sayd he
And then shalt thou not repent the
But tho that Salomon speake such a worde
Myne owne dere brother and my lorde
So wysely god my soule bryng to ease & rest
I holde your owne counsayle for the best.
For brother myne, take of me thys motyfe
I haue ben now a court man al my lyfe
And god wote, though I now vnworthy be
I haue standen in ful great degre
Abouen lordes in ful great estate
Yet had I neuer wyth none of hem debate
I neuer hem contraryed truely
I wote wel that my lorde can more then I
That he sayeth, I holde it ferme and stable
I say the same or elis thynge semblable
A ful great foole is any counsayloure
That serueth any lorde of hye honoure
That dare presume, or ones thynke it
That his cousaile shuld passe his lordes wyt
Nay, lordes be no fooles be my fay
Ye haue your selfe spoken here to day
So hye sentence, so holy & so wel
That I consent, and confirme euery del

Your

your wordes al, and your opinyon
By god there nys no man in al thys town
Ne in Itayle, coude bette haue sayd
Thilk holdeth hym of thys ful wel a payde
And trewly it is an hye corage
Of any man that is stopen in age
To taken a yong wyfe, by my father kyn
Your hert hongeth on a toly pyn
Doth now in this matere right as you lest
For finally I holde it for the best.
Iustynus that ay satte and herde
Right in thys wyse to Placebo he answerde
Nowe brother myne be pacyēt I you pray
Sith ye haue said, now herkeneth what I say
Seneca among other wordes wyse
Saith, that a man ought hym wel auyse
To whom he yeueth hys londe or his catel
And sythens I ought auyse me right wel
To whom I gyue my good away fro me
wel moche more I ought auysed be
To whom I gyue my body: for alway
I warne you wel it is no childes play
To take a wyfe without auysement
Wen must enquere (this is myne assent)
whether she be sobre, wise, or dronkelwe
Or proude, or other wayes a shrewe
A chider, or a waster of thy good
Other riche or poore, or els a man is wood
Al be it so, that no man fynde shal
Non in this worlde, that trotteth hole in all
Ne man, ne beest, suche as men can deuyse
But natheles, it ought ynough fullyse
With any wyfe, yf so were that she had
Mo good thewes, than her vices badde
And al thys asketh layser to enquere
For god wotte I haue wept many a tere
Ful preuely, sythe I had a wyfe
Praise who so wol a wedded mannes lyfe
Certeyn I fynde in it but cost and care
And obseruaunces of all blysses bare
And yet god wote, my neyghbours about
And namely of women many a rout
Seyn that I haue the most stedfast wyfe
And eke the mekest one that beareth lyfe
But I wot best, where wryngeth me my sho
Ye may for me, right as you lyst do
Auyse you, ye ben a man of age
Howe that ye entren into marlage
And namely with a yonge wife and a fayre
By him that made water, erthe, and ayre
The yongest man that is in al this rout
Is besy ynowe to bringe it about
To haue his wyfe alone, trusteth me
Ye shal nat pleasen her yeres thre
This is to sayn, to don her pleasaunce
A wyfe asketh ful moche obseruaunce
I praye you that ye be nat yuel apayde
wel (q this January) and hast thou al sayde
Strawe for thy Senec, and for thy prouerbes
I counte it nat worth a panyer ful of herbes
Of schole termes, wiser men than thou
As thou hast herde, assenteth it right nowe
To my purpose Placebo, what say ye
I say it is a cursed man (q he)
That letteth matrymony sekerly
And with thes wordes they risen sodaynly
And ben assented fully, that he shulde
Be wedded whan him list, and where he wolde
Hyghe fantasy and curiousnesse
Fro day to day, gan in the soule empresse
Of January, about hys marlage
Many fayre shappe, and many fayre vsage
There passeth throug his hert night by night
As who so toke a mirrour polysshed bright
And sette it in a comen market place
Than shulde he se many a figure pace
By his mirrour, and in the same wyse
Gan January within his thought deuyse
Of maydens, whiche that dwellen besyde
He wyst nat where he myght abyde
For yf that one had beautie in her face
Another stout so in the peoples grace
For her sadnesse and her benignyte
That of the people gretteste voyce had she
And some were riche, and had badde name
But natheles, bitwixt ernest and game
He at last apoynted hym on one
And lete al other from his hert gone
And chese her of his awne authorite
For loue is blynde al day, and may nat se
And whan ỳ he was in his bedde ybrought
He purtreyde in hys hert and in hys thought
Her freshe beaute, and her age tender
Her middle smal, her armes long and slender
Her wise gouernaunce, and her gentylnesse
Her womanly bearyng, and her sadnesse
And whā that he was on her condiscended
Him thoght his choise myght nat be amended
For whan that he him selfe concluded had
Him thought eche other mannes wyt so bad
That impossyble it were to reply
Ayenst his choice, this was hys fantasy
His frendes sent he to, at his instaunce
And prayeth hem to don hym that pleasaunce

That hastely they wolde to hym come
He wolde abrydgen her labour al and some
Nedeth nomore for hym to go ne ryde
He was appoynted there he wolde abyde
¶ Placebo came, and eke hys frendes sone
And alder fyrst he bad hem al a bone
That none of hem none argumentes make
Ayenst hys purpose that he hath take
which purpose was pleasaut to god (sayd he)
And very grounde of hys prosperite.
He sayd there was a mayden in the towne
whych of beauty hath great renowne
Al were it so, she were of smal degre
Suffyseth hym her youth and her beaute
whych mayde he sayd, he wold haue to wyfe
To leden in ease and in holynesse hys lyfe
And thanked god, þ he myght hauen her al
That no wyght hys blysse parten shal
And prayeth hem to labour in thys nede
And shapeth that he fayle not to spede
For then he sayd, hys spirite was at ease
Then is (q he) nothynge maye me displease
Saue o thynge prycketh in my conscience
The whych I wol reherce in your presence.
¶ I haue (q he) herde sayd ful yore ago
There may no mã haue parfyte blysses two
Thys is to say, in earth and eke in heuen
For though he kept him fro the synnes seuen
And eke from euery braunche of thylke tre
Yet is there so parfyte prosperite
And so great ease and lust in mariage
That euer I am agast nowe in myne age
That I shal lede nowe so mery a lyfe
So delycate wythout wo or stryfe
That I shal haue myne heuen in earth here
For sythen bery heuen is bought so dere
wyth tribulation and great penaunce
How shulde I then lyuyng in such pleasaunce
As al wedded men done wyth her wyues
Come to þ blysse, ther crist eterne on lyue is
Thys is my drede, and ye my brethren twey
Asloyleth me thys question I you prey.
¶ Justinus, whych that hated hys folye
Answered anon ryght in hys iapery
And for he wolde hys longe tale abrege
He wolde none authorite allege
But sayd: syr, so there be none obstacle
Other then thys, god of hys hye myracle
And of hys mercy may for you so wyrche
That ere ye han your ryghtes of holy chyrche
Ye may repent of wedded mannes lyfe
In whych ye sayen is neyther wo ne stryfe
And els god forbede, but yf he sent
A wedded man grace hym to repent
wel ofter, rather then a syngle man
And therfore syr, the best rede that I can
Dyspayreth you not, but haue in memory
Paraduenture she may be your purgatory
She may by goddes meane a goddes whip
Then shal your soule vp to heuen skip
Swyfter thẽ doth an arowe out of a bowe
I hope to god here after ye shal knowe
That ther nys none so great felicite
In mariage, ne neuer none shal be
That you shal let of your saluation
So that ye vse it as skyl is and reason
The lustes of your wyfe attemperately
And that ye please her not to amorously
And that ye kepe you eke fro other syn
My tale is done, for my wytte is thyn
Beth not agast herof my dere brother
But let vs wade fro thys matter to another
The wyfe of Bath, yf ye vnderstande
Of mariage, whych ye haue in hande
Declareth ful wel in a lytel space
Fareth now wel, god haue you in hys grace
And vp this worde, Justyne & his brother
Han take her leaue, and eche of hem of other
For when they sawe it must nedes be
They wrought so by wyfe and slye treate
That she thys mayde whych they hyght
As hastely as euer that she myght
Shal wedded be to thys January
I trowe it were to longe to you to tary
yf I you tolde of euery escrite and bonde
By whych she was fetted in hys londe
Or for to herken of her ryche arraye
But fynally comen is the daye
That to chyrch both ben they went
For to receyue the holy sacrament
Forth cometh þ preest, vp stole about his neck
And badde her be lyke Sara and Rebecke
In wysedome and trouth of mariage
And sayd hys orysons, as is the vsage
And crouched hem, & bad godde shuld hem bles
And made al seker ynowe wyth holynesse
Thus ben they wedded wyth solempnite
And at fest syteth he and she
wyth other worthy folke vpon the des
Al ful of ioye and blysse is the paleys
And ful of instrumentes and of vytayle
The moost deyntes of al Italie
Before him stode instrumentes of such sowne
That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion

He

Ne made neuer ſuch a melody.
At euery cours came loude myn̄ſtralcy
That neuer Ioab tromped for to here
Nother Theodomas yet halfe ſo clere
At Thebes, when the cytie was in doute
Bacchus the wyne hem ſkynketh al aboute
And Venus laugheth on euery wyght
For January was become her knyght
And wolde both aſſayen hys corage
In lybertie, and eke in mariage
And wyth her fyre brond in her hōde about
Daunceth before the bryde and al the rout
And certaynly, I dare wel ſayen tyght this
Emenius that god of weddynge is
Saw neuer in his life, ſo mery a wedded mā
Holde thou thy peace thou poet Marcian
That wryteſt vs that ylke weddynge mery
Of her philology and hym Mercury
And of the ſonges that the Muſes ſonge
To ſmal is both thy penne & eke thy tonge
For to deſcriuen of thys mariage
Whē tēder youth hath wedded ſtouping age
There is ſuch myrth, þ it may not be wrytten
Aſſayeth your ſelfe, then may ye wytten
yf that I lacke or none in thys matere
May that ſytte, wyth ſo benigne a chere
Her to beholde, it ſemed fayrey
Queene Heſter loked neuer wyth ſuch an eye
On Aſſuere, ſo meke a loke hath ſhe
I may you not deuyſe al her beaute
But thus moche of her beaute tel I may
That ſhe was like þ bryght morow of May
Fulfylde of al beaute, and of pleaſaunce
This January is rauyſhed in a traunce
And at euery tyme he loked in her face
But in hys herte, he gan her to manace
That he þ night, i his armes wold her ſtrein
Harder, then euer Paris dyd Heleyn
But natheles, yet had he great pyte
That ylke nyght offende her muſte he
And thought, alas, O tender creature
Now wolde god ye myght wel endure
Al my corage, it is ſo ſharpe and kene
I am agaſt ye ſhal it not ſuſtene
But god forbede, that I dyd al my myght
Now wolde god that it were ware nyght
And that the nyght wolde laſt euer mo
I wolde that al theſe people were ago
And fynally he doth all hys labour
As he beſt myght, ſauynge hys honour
To haſt hem fro the meat in ſubtel wyſe
The tyme came, that reaſon was to ryſe
And after that men daunceri, & drynke faſt
And ſpices all about the houſe they caſt
And ful of ioye and blyſſe is euery man
Al but a ſquyer, that hyght Damian
whych carfe before the knyght many a day
He was ſo rauyſhed on hys lady May
That for very payne he was ny wode
Almoſt he ſwelte, and ſouned there he ſtode
So ſore hath Venus hurt hym vp her brand
So freſhe ſhe was, and therto ſo lycande
And to hys bedde he went hym haſtely
No more of hym at thys tyme ſpeke I
But there I let hym wepe ynowe & playne
Tyl þ freſhe May wol rewen on hys payne.
O perilous fyre, þ in the bedſtraw bredeth
O famyler foe, that hys ſeruyce bedeth
O ſeruaunt traytour, falſe homely hewe
Lyke to the adder ſlye in boſome vntrewe
O January dronken in pleſaunce
God ſhylde vs al from your iniquitaunce
Of mariage, ſe howe thys Damian
Thyne owne ſquyer and thy borne man
Entendeth to done the villany
God graunt the thyne homely foe to eſpye
For in thys worlde nys were peſtilence
Then homely foe, al daye in thy preſence
Parfourmed hath the ſon his arke diurne
No lenger may the body of hym ſoiourne
On orizont, as in that latitude
Nyght wt hys mantel, that is darke & rude
Gan for to ſpreade, the hemyſpery about
For whych departed is the luſty rout
Fro January, wyth thanke on euery ſyde
Home to her houſes luſtely they ryde
There as they done her thynges, as am leſt
And when they ſawe her tyme to go to reſt
Done after thys luſty January
wol go to bedde, he wolde no lenger tary
He drynketh ypocras, clarrey, and vernage
Of ſpyces hote, to encreaſe hys corage
And many a lectuary had he full fyne
Such as the curſed monke dan Cōſtantyne
Hath wryten in hys boke of Coitu
To eaten hem al he nolde nothyng eſchewe
And thus to hys preuy frendes ſayd he
For goddes loue, as ſone as it may be
Let voyde al this houſe in curteys wiſe ſone
When dunkē, and the trauers drewe anone
So haſted January, it muſt be done
The bryd was brought to bed as ſtyl as ſton
And whē the bed was with þ preeſt bleſſed
Out of þ chābre hath euery wight hē dreſſed

And January hath fast in armes take
Hys fresshe May, hys paradyse, hys make
He lulleth her, he kysseth her ful ofte
wyth thycke bristeles of hys berde vnsofte
Lyke ỹ skyn of Houndfysh, as sharp as bryere
For he was shaue al newe in hys manere
He rubbeth her vpon her tendre face
And sayd thus: Alas, I mote trespace
To you my spouse, and you greatly offende
Or tyme come, that I wol downe dyscende
But natheles, consydereth thys (q̄ he)
There nys no workman, what so euer he be
That may both wyrche wel and hastely
Thys wol be done at leyser parfytely
It is no force howe longe that we play
In trewe wedlocke coupled be we tway
And blessed be the yoke that we bene in
For in our actes we mowe do no syn
A man may do no synne wyth hys wyfe
Ne hurte hym selfe wyth hys owne knyfe
For we haue leaue to play vs by the lawe
Thus laboureth he, fyl the day gan dawe
And then he taketh a soppe in fyne clarre
And vpryght in hys bedde then syt̄eth he
And after that he syngeth full loude & clere
And kyst hys wyfe, and maketh wantō chere
He was al coltysshe, and ful of ragery
And ful of gergon, as is a flecked pye
The flacke skynne aboute hys necke shaketh
Whyle that he songe, so chaucteth he & craketh
But god wot what May thought & her herte
When she hym sawe, vpsyttyng in hys sherte
In hys nyght cappe, with hys necke lene
She prayseth not his playeng worth a bene
Then sayd he thus: my rest wol I take
Now daye is come, I may no lenger wake
And downe he layd his heed, & slept til prime
And afterward, when that he saw hys tyme
Up ryseth January, but fresshe May
Holdeth her chambre to the fourth day
As vsage is of wyues for the best
For euery labour somtyme moste haue rest
Or els longe may he not endure
Thys is to say, no lyues creature
Be it fysshe or beest, brydde or man
Now wol I speake of wofull Damian
That languyssheth for loue, as ye shal here
Therfore I spoke to hym in thys manere.
I say, O sely Damian, alas
Answere to thys demaunde, as in thys cas
Howe shal thou to thy lady fresshe May
Tel thy wo? she wol alwaye saye nay
Eke yf thou speke, she wol thy wo bewray
God be thyn helpe, I can no better say
Thys sycke Damian in Venus fyre
So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyre
For whych he put hys lyfe in auenture
No lenger myght he in thys wyse endure
But priuely a penner gan he borowe
And in a letter wrote he al hys sorowe
In maner of a complaynt or a lay
Unto thys fayre and fresshe lady May
And in a purse of sylke, hongyng on hys shert
He hath it put, and layde it at hys hert
The mone at noone tyde that ylke day
(That January hath ywedded fresshe May)
Out of Taure was in the Cancre gleden
So longe hath May in her chambre bydden
As custome is, vnto theyr nobles al
A bryde shal not eaten in the hal
Tyl dayes foure, or thre at the leest
Ipassed bene, then let her gon to feest
The fourth day complete fro noon to noone
when that the hye masse was ydone
In hal sat thys January and May
As fresshe as is thys brycht somers day
And so befyl, how that thys good man
Remembreth hym vpon thys Damian
And sayd: saynt Mary how may thys be
That Damian entendeth not to me
Is he aye sycke: or how may thys betyde
Hys squyers whych that stode hym besyde
Excused hym, because of hys sycknesse
whych letted hym to done hys besynesse
None other cause myght make hym tary
That me forthynketh (q̄ this January)
He is a gentle squyer be my trouthe
If that he dyed, it were harme and routhe
He is as wyse, discrete, and secre
As any man that I wote of hys degre
And therto manly and seruysable
And for to be a thryfty man ryght able
But after meate, as sone as euer I may
I wol my selfe vysete hym, and eke May
To done hym al the comforte that I can
And for that worde, hym blessed euery man
That of hys bounte and of hys gentrynesse
He wolde so comforten in hys dystresse
Hys squyer, for it was a gentle dede
Dame (q̄ this January) take good hede
That after meate, ye and your women al
(when ye haue ben in chābre out of this hal)
That al ye gone to se thys Damian
Doth hym dysporte, he is a gentyl man

And

And telleth hym that I wol hym visite
Have I nothyng but rested me a lyte
And spede you fast, for I wol abyde
Tyl that ye slepe fast by my syde
And with that worde he gan to hym cal
A squyer, that was Marshal of hys hal
And tolde him certayn thynge that he wolde
This fresh May hath streight her way thold
With al her women, vnto this Damyan
Downe by hys beddes syde sat she then
Confortyng hym as goodly as she may
This Damyan, whā that he his tyme say
In secrete wyse, hys purse and eke hys byl
(In whiche he had wrytten al hys wyl)
Hath put in to her honde withouten more
Save that he syghed wonders depe and sore
And sothly, to her tyght thus sayd he
Mercy, and that ye discouer nat me
For I am deed, yf that this tiyng be kydde
This purse hath she in her bosome hydde
And went her way, ye gete no more of me
But vnto January is come is she
And on hys beddes syde she sytte ful softe
He taketh her, and kysseth her ful ofte
And layde hym downe to slepe, and that anon
She fayned her, as that she must gon
There as ye wote, yt euery wight hath nede
And whan she of this byl hath taken hede
She rent it al to cloutes, and at last
In to the preuy softly she it cast.
Who studieth nowe but faire fresshe May
And adown by January she lay
That slepte, tyl the cough hath hym awaked
Anon he prayde her to strype her al naked
He wolde of her he sayd have some pleasaunce
He sayd her clothes dyd hym encombraunce
And she obeyeth be she lefe or lothe
But lest that precious folke be vn me wrothe
How that he wrought, I dare nat to you tel
Or whether she thought it paradise or hel
But I lette hem worche in her wyse
Tyl curtlong tyng, that they must aryse
Were it by destenye or by auenture
Were it by influence, or by nature
Or constellacion that in suche estate
The heuen stode, that tyme fortunate
(Was for to put a byl of Venus workes)
For al tyng hath tyme, as sayn clerkes
To any woman for to gete her loue
I can nat say, but the great god aboue
That knoweth, that non acte is causeles
He demeth al, for I wol holde my pees.
But sothe is this, howe yt this freshe May
Hath take suche impressyon that day
Of pyte, on thys sicke Damyan
That fro her hert she dryue ne can
The remembraunce for to downe hym ease
Certayn (thought she) whom thys tyng displease
I recke not, for this I hym assure
I loue hym best of any creature
Though he no more had than hys shert.
Lo pyte renneth soone in gentyl hert
Here may ye se, howe excelent franchise
In women is, whan they hem narow auyse
Some tyrant is, as there ben many one
That hath an hert as harde as any stone
Which wolde haue lete him sterue in yt place
Wel rather thā haue graunted hym her grace
And her reioysed in her cruel pride
And nat haue reched to been an homicide.
Thys gentyl may, fulfylled of al pyte
Right so of her honde a lettre made she
In whiche she graunteth him her very grace
There lacketh nought, but only tyme & place
Where that she might to hys lust suffyse
For it shal be, right as he wol deuyse
And whan she sawe her tyme vpon a day
To visite this Damyā goth thys faire May
And subtelly this lettre down she thrist
Under hys pyllowe, rede it yf hym lyst
She taketh him by yt hond, & hertly him twist
So secretely, that no wight of it wyst
And badde hym ben al hole, & forth she went
To January, whan that he for her sent.
Up ryseth Damyan the next morowe
Al passed was hys sickenesse and hys sorowe
He kembeth hym and proyneth hym & pyketh
And dothe all that hys lady lust and lyketh
And eke to January he gothe as lowe
As euer dyd a dogge for the bowe
He is so plesaunt to euery man
For craft is al, who that it can
That euery wight is fayn to speke him gode
And fully in hys ladyes grace he stode
Thus lette I Damyan about his nede
And in my tale, forthe I wol procede.
Some clerkes holden that felycite
Stont in delyte, and therfore certayn he
Thys noble January with al hys might
In honest wyse, as longeth to a knyght
Shope hym to lyue ful delycyously
Hys housyng, hys array, as honestly
To hys degre, was made as a kynges
Among other of hys honest thynges

He had a garden walled al with stone
So faire a garden was there neuer none
For out of dout, I verily suppose
That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose
Ne couth of it the beaute wel deuyse
Ne Priapus, ne myght nat suffyse
Though he be god of gardens, for to tell
The beaute of the garden, and of the wel
That stont vnder a laurer alway grene
Ful often tyme kyng Pluto and hys quene
Proserpina, and al her fayrie
Disporten hem, and maken melodye
About that wel, and daunced as men tolde
This noble knight, this January the olde
Such deynte hath, in it to walke and play
That he wol suffre no wight to bere the kay
Saue he hym self, for the smal wicket
He bare alway of syluer a clycket
With which, whan that hym lyst vnlocke
And whan that he wolde pay hys wyfe her
In somer season, thider wolde he go (det
And May his wife, and no wight but they two
And thinges whiche þ were nat don a bedde
He in the garden parfourmed hem & spedde
And in thys wyse, many a merry day
Lyued this January and thys fresshe May
But worldly ioye may nat alway endure
To January, ne to no lyuyng creature.
O sodayne hap, O thou fortune vnstable
Lyke to the Scorpion deceyuable
That flatrest vh thy hed whā þ wolt stynge
Thy tayle is deth, thrugh thyn enuenomyng
O brotel ioye, O swete poyson queynt
O monster, that so sodaynly canst peynt
Thy gyftes, vnder the hewe of stedfastnesse
That thou deceyuest bothe more and lesse
why hast thou January thus deceyued
And haddest hym for thy frende receyued
And now thou hast beraft hym both his eyen
For sorowe of whiche desyreth he to dyen
Alas, this noble January that is so fre
Amydde his lust and his prosperite
Is woxen blynde, and al sodaynly
His dethe therfore desyreth he vtterly
And therwithal, the fyre of ielousy
(Lest that his wyfe shulde fal in some foly)
So brent hys hert, that he wolde fayne
That some man, bothe hym & her had slayne
For neuer after hys dethe, ne in hys lyfe
Ne wolde he that she were loue ne wyfe
But euer lyue a wedowe in clothes blake
Sole, as the turtle doth þ hath lost her make
But at the last, after a monyth or tweye
His sorowe gan to swage, sothe to saye
For whan he wyst it might non other be
He pacientlyy toke hys aduersyte
Saue out of dout may he nat for gone
That he nas ielous euer more in one
whiche ielousy, it was so outragious
That neyther in hal ne in non other hous
Ne in non other place neuer mo
He nolde suffre her, neyther ryde ne go
But if that he had honde on her alway
For whiche ful often wepeth fresshe May
That loueth Damyan so benygnely
That she mote eyther dye sodaynly
Or els she mote haue hym at her lest
She wayteth whan her hert shulde to brest
Upon that other syde Damyan
Become is, the sorowfullest man
That euer was, for neyther nyght ne day
Ne myght he speke a worde to fresshe May
As to his purpose of no suche matere
But þ that January must it here
That had an honde vpon her euer mo
But natheles, by writeyng to and fro
And prevy sygnes, wist he what she ment
And she knewe al the sygnes of hys entent.
O January, what myght the it auayle
Tho thou mayest se, as fer as shippes sayle
For as good is a blynde man deceyued be
As to be deceyued, whan that a man may se.
Lo Argus, which had an hundred eyen
For all that euer he couthe pore and pryen
Yet was he blent, and god wotte so ben mo
That wenen wisely that it is nat so
Passe ouer is an ease, I say no more
This fresh May, of which I spake of yore
In warme ware hath prayed this clycket
That January bare of that smal wicket
By whiche vnto hys garden ofte he went
And Damyan that knewe her entent
The clycket counterfayted prively
There nys no more to say, but hastely
Some wonder by this clycket shal betyde
Whiche ye shul heren, yf ye wol abyde.
O noble Ouide, sothe sayest thou god wot
what sleight is it, though it be long and hot
That he nyl fynde it out in some manere
By Pyramus and Thisbe, may men lere
Though they were kept ful lōg streyt ouer al
They ben accorded, rowning through a wal
Ther nis no wight couth fynde such a sleight
But nowe to purpose, er þ dayes eyght

were

Were paſſed, er the moneth of Iule befyll
That January hath caught ſo great a wyl
Though egging of his wife, him for to play
In his garden, & no wight but they tway
That in a morowe, vnto this May ſayd he
Ryſe vp my wife, my loue, my lady free
The turtel voyce is herde my lady ſweete
The wynter is gon, with al his raynes weete
Come forth now with thyn eyen columbyne
Aowe fayrer ben thy bieſtes than is wyne
The garden is enclоſed al about
Come forth my white ſpouſe out of dout
Thou haſt me wounded in my hert, o, wyfe
No ſpotte in the nas in al thy lyfe
Come forth and lette vs taken our diſport
I chele the for my wyfe and my comfort
Suche olde lewde wordes vſed he
On Damyan a ſygne made ſhe
That he ſhulde go before with hys clicket
This Damyan hath opened this wicket
And in he ſtert, and that in ſuche maniere
That no wight might it ſe ne here
And ſyth he ſate vnder a buſſhe anon.
This January, as blynde as is a ſton
With May in hys honde, and no wight mo
In to hys freſhe garden is he go
And clapte to the wicket ſodainly.
Aowe wyfe (q he) here nys but thou & I
That arte the creature that I beſt loue
For by that lorde that ſyttе vs al aboue
I had leuer dyen on a knyfe
Than the offende, dere trewe wyfe
For goddes ſake thynke howe I the chees
Nat for coueitiſe, ne other good doutlees
But onely for the loue I had to the
And though that I be olde and may nat ſe
Be to me trewe, and I woll tel yon why
Certes, thre thynges ſhal ye wyn therby
Firſt loue of Chriſt, & to your ſelfe honour
And al myn heritage, town and toure
I gyue it you, maketh charters as ye lyſt
Thys ſhal be don to morowe er ſonne ryſt
So wiſely god my ſoule bring to blyſſe
I pray you on couenaunt that ye me kyſſe
And though ꝑ I be ielous wite me nought
Ye ben ſo depe enprented in my thought
That whan I conſyder your beaute
And therwithal, the vnlikly elde of me
I may nat certes, though I ſhulde dye
Forbere, to ben out of your company
For dere loue, this is withouten dout
Now kyſſe me wife, and lette vs rome about
This freſh May, whã ſhe theſe wordes herd
Benygnely to January anſwerde
But fyrſt and forwarde ſhe began to wepe
I haue (q ſhe) a ſoule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and alſo myn honour
And of wyfehode thilke tender flour
Whiche that I haue enſured in your honde
Whan that the preeſt to you my body bonde
Wherfore I wol anſwere in this maniere
By the leaue of you my lorde ſo dere
I pray god that neuer dawe that day
That I ne ſterue, as foule as woman may
Yf euer I do to my kynne that ſhame
Or elſ that I empayre ſo my name
That I be falſe, and yf I do that lacke
Do ſtripe me, and putte me in a ſacke
And in the next ryuer do me dreſche
I am a gentyl woman, and no wenche
Why ſpeke ye thus, but men ben euer vntrew
And women haue reproue of you, aye newe
Ye can non other comunyng, I leue
But ſpeke to vs of vntruſt and repreue
And with ꝑ word ſhe ſawe where Damiã
Sate in the buſſhe, and knele he began
And with her fyngers ſygnes made ſhe
That Damyan ſhulde clymbe vp on a tre
That charged was with fruite, & vp he went
For verily he knewe al her entent
And euery ſygne that ſhe couth make
Wel bet than January her owne make
For in a letter ſhe had tolde him al
Of this mater, howe that he worch ſhal
And thus I lete hym ſytte in the pery
And January and May romyng ful mery.
Bright was the day, & blewe ꝑ fyrmament
Phebus of golde doun hath his ſtremes ſent
To gladen euery flour with hys warmneſſe
He was that tyme in Gemyny, as I geſſe
But lytel fro hys declynation
The cauſer of Ioues exaltation
And ſo byfel that bright morowe tyde
That in the garden, on the farther ſyde
Pluto, that is the kyng of Fayrye
And many a lady in hys company
Folowyng his wyfe, the quene Proſerpyne
Ech after other ryght as a lyne
Whiles ſhe gadred flowres in a mede
In Claudian ye may the ſtory rede
Howe in his griſely carte he her fette
This kyng of Fayry doun hym ſette
Vpon a benche of turues freſhe and grene
And right anon thus ſayd he to hys quene

Wy

My wyfe (q he) that may nat ly nay
The experience so proueth it euery day
The treason, which that women doth to mā
Tenne hundred thousande tel I can
Notable, of your untrouth and vntrewelle
O Salomon, richest of al richelle
Fulfylde of sapience, and of worldly glory
Ful worthy ben thy wordes in memory
To euery wight, that witte and reason can
Thus prayseth he the bounte of man
Among a thousande men yet fonde I one
But of al women fonde I neuer none
Thus saith ỳ kyng, ỳ knoweth your wickednesse
And Jesus filius Sirach, as I gesse
Ne spoketh of you but selde reuerence
A wylde fyre, a corrupte pestilence
So fal vpon your bodies yet to nyght
Ne se ye nat thys honorable knyght
Bicause (alas) that he is blynde and olde
His owne man shal maken him cokolde
Lo where he sytte, the lechour in the tre
Nowe wol I graunt of my maiestie
Vnto this olde blynde worthy knyght
That he shal haue agayn hys eye syght
Whan that hys wyfe wolde don him villany
Than shal he knowe al her harlotry
Bothe in repriefe of her and other mo.
Yea shal (q Proserpyne) and wol ye so
Nowe be my mothers soule syr I swere
That I shal yeuen her sufficient answere
And al women after her take
That though they ben in any gylte itake
With face bolde, they shullen hem selue excuse
And bere hym doun, that wolde hem accuse
For lacke of answere, non of hem shul dyen
Al had he sey a thyng with bothe hys eyen
Yet shulde we women so visage it hardely
And wepe and swere, and chide subtelly
That ye shal ben as leude as gees
What recketh me of your auctoritees
I wotte wel this tewe, this Salomon
Founde of vs women foles many one
But though he ne fonde no good woman
Yet there hath fonde many an other man
Women ful trewe, ful good, & ful vertuous
Witnesse of hem that dwel in Christes hous
With martyrdom, they preued her constaunce
The Romain gestes eke make remembraunce
Of many a very trewe wyfe also
But syr, be nat wrothe though it be so
Though that he said he fond no good woman
I pray you take the sentence of the man
He ment thus, that in souerayn bounte
Nys non but god, that sytteth in trynyte.
Eye, for very god that nys but one
What make ye so moche of Salomon:
What though he made a temple goddes hous
What though he were riche and glorious:
So made he a temple of false goddes
How might he don a thing ỳ more forbode is
Parde as faire as ye hys name enplastre
He was a lechour, and an idolastre
And in his elde, very god forsoke
And ỳ that god nadde (as saith the boke)
Ỳspared hym for hys fathers sake, he shulde
Haue lost his regne sonet than he wolde
I sette nat of al the villany
That ye of women write, a butterfly
I am a woman, nedes must I speke
Or elis swel, tyll myn herte breke
For sythen he sayd, that we ben tatlerelles
As euer mote I bole broke my tresses
I shal nat spare for no curtesy
To speke hem harme, that wold vs villany
Dame (q this Pluto) be no lenger wroth
I gyue it vp: but sythe I swore myn othe
That I wolde graunt hym hys syght ayen
My worde shal stande, ỳ warn I you certayn
I am a kyng, it sytte me nat to lye.
And I (q she) a quene of fayre
Her answere she shal haue I vndertake
Lette vs no mo wordes herof make
Forsoth I wol no lenger you contrary.
Nowe lette vs turne agayn to January
That in the garden with this faire May
Syngeth merier than the popyngay
You loue I best, and shal, and other non
So long about the alleyes is he gon
Tyl he was comen ayenst thylke pery
Where as this Damyan sytteth ful mery
On hye, among these freshe leues grene.
This freshe May, that is so bright & shene
Gan for to sike, and sayd: alas my syde
Nowe syr (q she) for ought that may be tyde
I must haue of these peeres that I here se
Or I mote dye, so sore longeth me
To eten of the smal peeres grene
Helpe for her loue that is heuyn quene
I tel you wel a woman in my plyte
May haue to fruite so great an appetyte
That she may dyen, but she it haue
Alas (q he) that I ne had here a knaue
That couth clymbe, alas, alas (q he)
For I am blynde, ye syr no force (q she)

But

But wolde ye vouchsafe for godde, sake
The pery in your armes for to take
For wel I wotte that ye mystrust me
Than shulde I clymbe wel ynough (q̄ she)
So I my fote myght sette vpon your backe
Forsoth sayd he, in me shal be no lacke
Myght I you helpe with myne hert blode
He stoupeth doun, & on hys backe she stode
And caught her by a twist, and vp she goth
Ladyes I praye you be nat wroth
I can nat glose, I am a rude man
And sodaynly anon this Damyan
Gan pullen vp the smocke, and in he thronge
I great tent, a thrifty and a longe
And she sayd it was the merryest fytte
That euer in her lyfe she was at yet
My lordes tent serueth me nothyng thus
It foldeth twifolde by swete Jesus
He may nat swyue worth a lecke
And yet he is ful gentyl and ful meke
This is leuer to me than an euensong
And whan that Pluto sawe thys wronge
To January he gaue agayn his syght
And made hym se alwel as euer he myght
And whan he had caught his syght agayn
Ne was there neuer man of thyng so fayn
Vpon his wyfe his thought was euer mo
Up to the tree he cast his eyen two
And saw how Damyan his wife had dressed
In suche maner it may nat be expressed
But yf I wolde speke vncurtesly
And vp he yaf a rosyng and a crye
As doth the mother whan the child shal dye
Out helpe alas harowe he gan to crye
For sorowe almost he gan to dye
That his wife was swyued in the pery
O stronge lady hore what dost thou
And she answered syr what ayleth you
Haue patience and reason in your mynde
I haue you holpen of both your eyen blynde
Up peryl of my soule, I shal nat lyen
As me was taught to helpe with your eyen
Was nothyng bette for to make you se
Than strogle with a man vpon a tree
God wote I dyd it in ful good entente
Strogle (q̄ he) yea algate in it went
Lyste and rounde as any bel
It is no wonder though thy bely swel
The smocke on hys brest lay so theche
And euer me though he poynted on ꝑ breche
God gyue you bothe on shames deth to dyen
He swyued the, I sawe it with myne eyen
And els I be honged by the halse
Than is (q̄ she) my medicyn falce
For certayn, yf that ye myght se
Ye wolde nat say theke wordes to me
Ye haue some glymsyng, and no parfite sight
I se (q̄ he) as wel as euer I might
Thanked be god, with bothe myne eyen two
And by my trouth me thought he dyd so
Ye mase ye mase, good syr (q̄ she)
This thanke haue I for that I made you se
Alas (q̄ she) that euer I was so kynde
Now dame (q̄ he) let al passe out of mynde
Come down my lefe, and if I haue mysdyde
God helpe me so, as I am ful apayde
But by my fathers soule, I wende haue seyn
Howe that this Damyan had by the seyn
And that thy smocke had lyen vpon his brest
Ye syr (q̄ she) ye may wene as ye lest
But syr, a man that waketh out of hys slepe
He may nat sodaynly wel taken kepe
Vpon a thyng, ne se it parfitely
Tyl that he be adawed verily
Right so a man that longe hath blynde be
Ne may nat sodaynly so wel yse
First whan the sight is newe comen a gayn
As he that hath a daye or two ysayn
Tyl that your sight istabled be a whyle
There may ful many a sight you begyle
Beware I pray you, for by heuen kyng
Ful many a man weneth to se a thyng
And it is al another than it semeth
He that mysconceyueth ofte mysdemeth
And with that worde she lepe doun fro ꝑ tre
This January, who is gladde but he
He kysseth her, he clypped her ful ofte
And on her wombe he stroketh her ful softe
And to hys palays home he hath her ladde
Nowe good men I pray you, bethe al glad
Thus endeth here my tale of January
God blesse vs al, and hys mother Mary.

¶ Thus endeth the Marchauntes tale, and here foloweth the wife of Bathes prologue.

Experience



EXperience, though none auctho-
rite
Were in this worlde, is ryght
ynowe for me
To speake of wo that is in ma-
riage
For lordinges, sith I twelue yere was of age
Thonked be god, that is eterne on lyue
Housbondes at chirche dore haue I had fyue
If I so ofte myght haue wedded be
And al were worthy men in her degre.
But me was tolde not longe ago twys
That sythen Christ went neuer but onys
To weddyng, in the cane of Galilee
That by thylke ensample taught he me
That I ne shulde wedded be, but ones.
Lo here, which a sharpe word for þ nones
Besyde a well, Jesu god and man
Spake in reprefe of the Samaritan
Thou hast had fyue housbandes (q he)
And that ilke man that now hath the
Is not thyne housbonde: thus sayd he certayn
what he ment therby I can not sayn
But that I aske, why the fyfte man
was no housbonde to the Samaritan
Howe many myght she haue in mariage
Yet herde I neuer tellen in myne age
Upon this nombre trewe diffynition
Men may deuyne, and glosen vp and doun
But well I wotte expresse without lye
God badde vs for to wexe and multiply
That gentyl text can I well vnderstonde
Eke well I wotte he sayd myne housbonde
Shuld leaue father & mother, and take to me
But of nombre no mention made he
Of bigamye or of octogamye
Why shul men speke of it villanye
Lo the the wyse kyng Salomon
I trowe had wyues mo than one
As wolde god it leful were to me
To be refreshed halfe so ofte as he
which a gifte of god had he, for al hys wyues
No man hath such, þ in this worlde a lyue is
God wotte this noble kynge, as to my wytte
The fyrst nyght had many a mery fytte
with eche of hem, so well was hym a lyue
Blessed be god, I haue had fyue
welcome the fyrste whan euer he shal
For sothe I wol not kepe me chaste in al
whan myne housbonde is fro the worlde ygon
Some cristen man shal wedde me anon
For than the apostel sayth, that I am free
To wedde a goddes halfe, where it lyketh me
He sayth, that to be wedded is no synne
Better is to be wedded then to brynne
What recketh me though folke say villany
Of shrewde Lameth, and of hys bigamy
I wotte wel Abraham was an holy man
And Jacob eke, as fer as euer I here can
And eche of hem had wyues mo than two
And many another holy man also
Where can ye say in any manere age

That

That euer god defended mariage
By expresse wordes? I pray you tel me
Or where comaunded he virginyte?
I wotte as wel as ye, it is no drede
The Apostel, whan he spake of maydenhede
He sayd, therof precepte had he none
Men may counsayle a woman to be one
But counsayling is no comaundement
He put it in our owne iugement
For had god comaunded maydenhede
Tha had he dampned wedding out of drede
And certes, yf there were no sede ysowe
Virginite than wherof shulde it growe?
Poule durst not comaunde at the leste
A thing, of which his maister yaf none heste
The dore is set vp for virginite
Catche who so may, who renneth beste let se.
But thys counsayle is not take of euery wight
But there as god lyst yeue it of his might
I wotte wel that the apostel was a mayde
But natheles, though that he wrote & sayde
He wolde that euery wight were suche as he
All nys but counsayle to virginite
And for to ben a wyfe he yaue me lene
Of indulgence, so it be not to repreue
To wedde me, yf that my make dye
Without exception of bygamye
All were it good no woman for to touche
He mene as in his bedde or in his couche
For peryl is, bothe fyre and towe to assemble
Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble
This is all and some, he holde virginite
More parfyte than wedding in freelte.
Freelte clepe I, but yf that he and she
Wolde lede her lyfe all in chastite
I graunte it wel, I haue none envye
Though maydenhede preferre bygamye
It lyketh hem to be clene in body and goste
Of myne estate I wol make no boste
For wel ye knowe, a lorde in his housholde
Hath nat euery vessel all of golde
Some ben of tree, and do her lorde seruyce
God clepeth folke to hym in sondry wyse
And euerriche hath of god a proper gifte
Some this, some that, as hym lyketh shifte
Virginyte is great perfection
And continence clene with deuocion
But Christ, that of perfection is wel
Badde nat euery wight he shulde go sel
All that he had, and yeue it to the poore
And in suche wise folowe hym and his lore
He spake to hem, that wolde lyue parfitly
And lordinges (by your leaue) that am nat I
I wol bestowe the floure of al myne age
In the actes and fruite of mariage
Tel me also, to what conclusyon
Were membres made of generation?
And of so parfite wise a wight wrought
Trusteth wel, they were nat made for nought
Glose who so wol, and saye vp and doun
That they were made for purgacioun
Of vryne, and other thynges smale
And eke to knowe a female from a male
And for non other cause, what say ye no?
The experience wotte wele it is nat so
So that the clerkes be nat with me wroth
I saye that they were maked for bothe
This is to sayn, for office and for ease
Of engendrure, there we nat god displease
Why shulde men elis in her bokes sette
That man shulde yelde to hys wyfe her dette
Now wherwith shulde he pay his payment?
If he ne vsed his sely instrument
Than were they made vpon a creature
To purge vryn, and eke for engendrure
But I say nat, that euery wight is holde
That hath suche harnesse, as I to you tolde
To go and ben hem in engendrure
Than shulde men take of chastite no cure
Christ was a mayde, and shapen as a man
And many a sayne, sythen the worlde began
Yet lyued they euer in parfyte chastite
I nyl enuy no virginyte
Lete hé with breddé of pure whete be fedde
And lete vs wyues eate barly bredde
And yet with barly bred, Marke tel can
Our lorde Jesu refreshed many a man
In suche a state as god hath cleped vs
I wol persewer, I nam nat precious
In wilfulnesse wol I vse myn instrument
As freely as my maker hath it sent
If I be daungerous, god yeue me sorowe
My husbónd shal it haue both euyn & morowe
Whan that him lyst come forth & pay his det
An husbande wol I haue I wot nat let
Which shal be bothe my dettour & my thral
And haue his tribulacion with al
Upon his flesshe, while that I am his wyfe
I haue the power during al my lyfe
Upon his proper body, and nat he
Right thus the Apostle tolde to me
And badde our husbondes for to loue vs wel
All this sentence me lyketh euery del.
Up stert the Pardoner, and that anon

Nowe dame q̄ he, by god & by saynt Johan
Ye ben a noble prechour in thys cause
I was about to wedde a wyfe, alas
what, shulde I bye it on my flesshe so dere
Yet had I leuer wedde no wyfe to yere
Abyde q̄ she, my tale is not begon
Nay, thou shalt drynke of another ton
Er that I go, shal sauer worse then ale
And when that I haue told forth my tale
Of tribulation that is in mariage
Of whych I am expert in al myne age
This is to say, my selfe haue ben the whyp
Then mayst thou chese whether ꝑ wylt slyp
Of thylke tonne, that I shal set abroche
Beware of it, er thou to nere approche
For I shal tel ensamples mo then ten
who so wol not beware by other men
By hym shal other men corrected be
These same wordes wryteth Ptholome
Rede in hys almagest, and take it there.
Dame I wol pray you, yf your wyll were
Sayd this pardoner, as ye began
Tel forth your tale, spareth for no man
And teache vs yonge men of your practyke
Gladly, q̄ she, yf it may you lyke
But that I praye to al this company
yf that I speake after my fantasy
As taketh not agrefe of that I say
For myne entent is not but to play
Now syrs, then shal I tel forth my tale
As euer mote I drynke wyne or ale
I shal say soth, tho husbondes that I had
Thre of hem were good, and two were bad
The thre good men were ryche and olde
Vnnethes myght they the statute holde
In whych they were bounden vnto me
Ye wote wel what I meane of this parde
As god me helpe, I laugh when I thynke
How pitously a night I made hem to swynke
But by my faye, I tolde of it no store
They had me geue her londe and her tresore
Me neded no lenger to do diligence
To wynne her loue, and hem reuerence
They loued me so wel by god aboue
That I ne tolde no deynte of her loue
A wyse woman wol besy her euer in one
To gete her loue, there as she hath none
But sythen I had hem holly in my honde
And that they had geue me al her londe
what, shulde I take kepe hem for to please
But yf it were for my profyte and myn ease
I sette hem so a worke by my fey
That many a nyght they songen wel alway
The bacon was not fet for hem I trowe
That some men haue in Essex at Dunmowe
I gouerned hem so wel after my lawe
That eche of hem ful blysful was & fawe
To bryngе me gaye thynges fro the fayre
They were ful fayne whē I spake hem fayre
For god it wote, I chydde hem spytously
Nowe herkeneth howe I bere me properly.
Ye wyse wyues that can vnderstande
Thus shul ye speake, and bere hem on hande
For halfe so boldely there can no man
Swere and lye, as a woman can
I saye not this by wyues that ben wyse
But yf it be, when they hem mysse anyse
A wyse wyfe shal, yf that she can her gode
Bere hem in honde the crowe is wode
And take witnesse of her owne mayde
Of her assent: but herkeneth howe I sayde.
Syr olde kenyarde, is this thyn array
why is my neyghbours wyfe so gay
She is honoured ouer al where she goth
I sytte at home, and haue no thrifty cloth
what dost thou at my neyghbours house
Is she so fayre, art thou so amorous
what rownest thou to our mayde benedicite
Syr olde lechour, let thy japes be
And yf I haue a gossyp or a frende
(wythout gylt) thou chydest as a fende
yf that I walke or play vnto his house
Thou comest home as dronke as a mouse
And prechest on thy benche wyth euel preste
Thou sayest to me, it is a great myschefe
To wedde a poore woman for costage
And yf that she be ryche of hygh parage
Then sayst thou, it is a peyne tourmentry
To suffre her pryde and her melancoly
And yf that she be fayre, thou false knaue
Thou sayest that euery holour wol her haue
She may no whyle in chastite abyde
That is assayled on euery syde
Thou sayst some folke desyre vs for rychesse
Some for our shape, & some for our fayrnesse
And some, for she can eyther synge or daunce
And some for gentylnesse or for daliaunce
Some for her handes and her armes smale
Thus goeth al to the deuel by thy tale
Thou sayst men may not kepe a castel wall
It may so longe assayled be ouer all
And yf that she be foule, thou sayest that she
Coueteth euery man that she may se
For as a spaniel, she wol on hem lepe

Tyl

Tyll þ the fynde some man þ wold her chepe
Ne none so gray geese goth there in the lake
(As sayst thou) wol ben wythout her make
And sayst, it is a harde thynge for to welde
A wyght, that no man wol his thanke helde
Thus sayst thou lorel, when þ gost to bed
That no wyseman needeth for to wedde
Ne no man that entendeth vnto heuen
With wylde thunder dent and fyre leuen
Moet thy wycked neeke be to broke.
Thou sayst, droppyng houses, & eke smoke
And chydyng wyues, maken men to flee
Out of her owne house, ah, benedicite
what ayleth such an olde man for to chyde
Thou sayst, we wyues wol our vices hyde
Tyl we be fast, and then we wol hem shewe
Wel may thys be a prouerbe of a shrewe.
Thou sayst, þ oxen, horse, asses, & hounds
They ben assayde at dyuers stounds
Basyns, lauers, er that men hem by
Spones, stoles, and al suche husbondry
And so be pottes, clothes, and arrayes
But folke of wyues maken none assayes
Tyl they ben wedded, olde dotarde shrewe
And sayst, how we wol thé our vices shewe
Thou sayest also, that it dysplaseth me
But yf that thou wylt prayse my beaute
And but thou poure alwaye on my face
And clepe me fayre dame in euery place
And but thou make a feest on that dyke day
That I was borne, & make me freshe & gay
And but thou done to my norice honour
And to my chamberer wythin my bour
And to my fathers folke, and hys seruyes
Thus sayest thou olde barel ful of lyes
And yet of our prentyse Ienkyn
For hys crysp heer, shynyng as golde fyne
And for he squyreth me both vp and down
Yhad thou caught a false suspection
I wol hym not, tho þ were deed to morowe.
But tel me this, why hydest thou wt sorowe
The keyes of thy chest away fro me
It is my good as wel as thyne parde
what, wenest þ make an ydiot of our dame
Nowe by þ lorde, þ called is saynt Iame
Thou shalt not both though þ were wode
Be mayster of my body and of my good
That one þ shalt forgon maugre thyne eyen
what helpeth it of me to enquere and spyen
I trowe thou woldest locke me in thy chyst
Thou shuldest saye: wyfe, go where you lyst
Take your disporte, I wol leue no talys
I knowe you for a trewe wyfe dame Alys
we loue no man, that taketh kepe or charge
where that we go, we wol be at our large
Of al men yblessed moet he be
The wyse astrologien dan Ptholome
That sayth thys prouerbe in his almagest
Of al men hys wysedome is the best
That recketh not who hath þ world in hãde
By thys prouerbe thou shalt vnderstande
Haue thou ynowe, what dare þ recke or care
Howe merely that other folke fare
For certes, olde dotarde by your leue
Ye shal haue queynte ynowe at eue
He is to great a nygarde that wol werne
A man, to lyght a candel at hys lanterne
He shal haue neuer the lasse lyght parde
Haue thou ynowe, thou dast not playne the
Thou sayst also, that yf we make vs gay
wyth clothes, or wyth precious arraye
That it is peryl of our chastite
And yet with sorow, thou must enforsen the
And saye these wordes in the apostels name
In habyte made with chastite & shame
Ye women shulde appareyle you (q he)
And not in frysled heer, and gaye perre
As perle, ne wyth golde, ne clothes ryche
After the tyme, ne after thy rubrycke
I nyl not worche as moche as a gnatte.
Thou sayest also, I was lyke a catte
But who so wolde venge the cattes skynne
Then wolde the catte dwellen in hys ynne
And yf the cattes skyn be slicke and gaye
She nyl not dwel in house halfe a daye
But forth she wol or any daye be dawed
To shewe her skyn, and gon a caterwaued.
Thus thou sayest, yf I be gay for shrewe
I wol ren out, my borel for to shewe
Syr olde foole, what helpeth the to spyen
For though thou play Argus wt hys .C. eyen
To be my wardcors, as he can best
In faith he shal not kepe me but me lest
Yet couth I make hys berde, so mote I the
Thou sayest eke, þ there ben thynges thre
The whych troublen al thys erth
And that no wyght may endure the ferth
O, lefe syr shrewe, Iesu shorte thy lyfe
Yet prechest thou, & sayest: an hateful wyfe
I rekened is, for one of these myschaunces
Ben there none other resemblaunces
That ye maye lyken your parable to
But yf a sely wyfe be one of tho.
Thou lyenest eke, wommens loue to hell

To barayn londe, there water may nat dwel
Thou lyuenest it also to wylde fyre
The more it brenneth, the more it hath desyre
To consume any thyng that brent wolde be.
Thou saiest, right as wormes shendé a tre
Right so a wyfe dystroyeth her husbonde
This knowen they that ben to wyues bonde
Lordinges, right thus as ye haue vnderstód
Bare I fayne my olde husbande on honde
That thus they sayden in her dronkenesse
And al was false, but as I took witnesse
Of Jenkyn, and of my nece also
O lorde the payne I dyd hem, and the wo
Ful guyltles by goddes swete pyne
For as an horse, I couth both byte & whyne
I couth playn, though I were in the gylte
Or els often tyme I had ben spylte
Who so fyrst to myl cometh, fyrst grynt
I playned fyrst, and so was our warre stynt
They were ful glad to excusen hem blyue
Of thyng, that they a gylt neuer in her lyue
Of wenches wol I bere hem on honde
What for sicke, vnneethes might they stond
Yet tickled I his hert, for that he
Wende I had of him so great cheere
I swore, that al my walkyng out by nyght
Was for to espy wenches, that he dight
Vnder that colour had I moche myrthe
For al swche wytte is geuen vs in our byrthe
Deceite, weping, spynnyng, god hath gyue
To women, kyndly whyle that they lyue
And thus of o thyng I may auaunt me
At thende I had the best in eche degre
By sleyght or force, or by some maner thyng
As by contynual murmure or grutchyng
Namely a bedde had they mischaunce
There wolde I chide, & don hé no pleasaunce
I wolde no lenger in the bedde abyde
(yf I felte hys arme ouer my syde)
Tyl he had made his raunsom vnto me
Than wolde I suffre hym do his nycete
And therfore, euery man this tale I telle
Wyne who so may, al ben for to selle
With empty handes men may no haukes lure
For wynnyng wolde I al his lust endure
And make me than a fayned appetite.
And yet in bacon had I neuer delyte
That maked me euer yt I wolde hem chyde
For though the pope had seten hem besyde
I wolde nat spare hem at her owen borde
For be my trouth I quit hem word for word
As helpe me very god omnypotent
Tho I right nowe shulde make my testament
I ne owe hem a worde, but it is quyte
I brought it so about by my wytte
That they must gyue it vp, as for the best
Or els had we neuer ben in rest
For though he loked as wode as a lyon
Yet shulde he fayle of his conclusyon.
Than wolde I say, good lefe take kepe
Howe meekely loketh wyfhen shepe
Come nere my spouse, & let me kysse your
Ye shulde be al patient and meke (chekc
And haue a swete spyced conscience
Sythe ye so preche of Jobs pacyence
Suffreth alway, syth ye so wel can preche
And but yf you do, we shal you teche
That it is fayre to haue a wyfe in pees
One of vs two must obeyen doutles
And sythe a man is more reasonable
Than a woman is, ye must ben suffrable
What ayleth you to grutche thus and grone
Is it for ye wolde haue my queynt alone
Why take it al, lo, haue it euery del
Peter I shrewe you, but ye lowe it wel.
For if I wolde sel my belechose
I couth walke as fresshe as any rose
But I wol kepe it for your owne tooth
Ye be to blame by god, I say you sooth
Swiche maner wordes had we on honde
Now wol I speke of my fourth husbonde.
My fourth husbonde was a reuelour
This is to say, he had a paramour
And I was yong and ful of ragery
Stubborne and strong, and tolv as a pye
Wel couthe I daunce to an harpe smale
And synge ywis, as a nyghtingale
Wha I had dronke a draught of swete wine
Metellius, the foule churle the swyne
That with a staffe byraft his wyfe her lyfe
For she dranke wine: though I had be his wyfe
Ne shulde he nat haue daunted me fro drynke
And after wyne of Venus must I thynke
For also sekerly, as colde engendreth hayle
A lycorous mouth must haue a lecherous tayle
In women vnmoleut is no defence
This knowe lechours by experience.
But lorde Christ, whan it remembreth me
Upon my youth, and my iolyte
It tickleth me about myne hert rote
Unto this day it doth myne hert bote
That I haue had my worlde, as in my tyme
But age alas, that al wol enuenyme
Hath me byraft my beaute, and my pith

Lete

Let go farewel, the deuel go therwyth
The floure is gone, there nys no more tel
The bran (as I best can) nowe more I sel
But yet to be ryght mery wol I fonde
Now forth to tel of my fourth husbonde.
I saye I had in hert great dyspyte
That he of any other had delyte
But he was quyte, by god and by saynt Joce
I made hym of the same wode a croce
Not of my body in no foule manere
But certaynly, I made folke such chere
That in hys owne grece I made hym fry
For anger, and for very ielousy
By god in erth I was hys purgatory
For whych I hope hys soule be in glory
For god it wote, he sate ful ofte and songe
whan that hys shoe ful bytterly hym wronge
There was none, saue god and he, that wyst
In many wyse, howe sore that I hym twyst
He deed when I came fro Hierusalem
And lyeth in graue vnder the Rode beem
Al nys hys tombe so curious
As was the sepulture of hym Darius
whych that Appelles wrought so subtelly
It is but wast to bury hym preciously
Let him farwel, god gyue his soule good rest
He is nowe in hys graue and in hys chest.
Nowe of my fyfth husbande wol I tel
God let neuer hys soule come in hel
And yet was he to me the most shrewe
That fele I on my ribbes al by rewe
And euer shal, vnto myne endynge day
But in our bedde he was so fresshe and gay
And therwythal, he couth so wel me glose
when that he wolde haue my bele chose
That though he had me bete on euery bone
He couth wynne ayen my loue anone
I trowe I loued hym the better, for that he
was of hys loue so daungerous to me
we women haue, yf that I shal not lye
In thys matere, a queynt fantasy
Wayte what thyng we may not lightly haue
Therafter wol we alday crye and craue
Forbyd vs thynge, and that desyren we
Prese on fast, and then wol we flee
wyth daunger bete we al our chaffare
Great prees at market maketh dere ware
And to great chepe is holde at to lytel pryce
Thys knoweth euery woman that is wyse.
My fyfth husbande, god hys soule blesse
whych I take for loue and no rychesse
He sometyme was a clerke of Oxenforde
And had lefte schole, & wet at home to borde
wyth my gossyp, dwellynge in our town
God haue her soule, her name was Alysoun
She knewe my hert, and eke my priuety
Better then our parysshe preest so mote I the
To her bewrayed I my counsayle al
For had my husbande pyst agaynst the wal
Or done a thynge, ỹ shulde haue cost his lyfe
To her, and another worthy wyfe
And to my nece, whych that I loued wel
I wolde haue tolde hys counsayle euery dell
And so I dyd ful often god it wote
That made hys face ful ofte reed and hote
For very shame, and blamed hym ofte, for he
Had tolde to me so great a preuyte.
And so befyl, that ones in a lent
So ofte tyme I to my gossyp went
For euer yet I loued to go gaye
And for to walke in March, Aprill, & May
Fro house to house, to herken sondry tales
That Jenkin clerke, & my gossyp dame Ales
And I my selfe, into the feldes went
My husbonde was at london al that lent
I had the better layser for to pleye
And for to se, and eke for to be seye
Of lusty folke, what wyst I where my grace
was shapen for to ben, or in what place
Therfore made I my vysytations
To vigilies, and to processions
To preachyng eke, and to pilgrymages
To playes of myracles, and to mariages
And wered on my gay scarlet gytes
The wormes, tyne moghtes, ne tyme mytes
Vpon my parel frette hem neuer a del
And wost thou why? for they were vsed wel
Nowe wol I tel forth what happed me
I saye that in the feldes walked we
Tyl truely we had such daliaunce
Thys clerke and I, that of my purueyaunce
I spake to hym, and sayd how that he
yf I were wedowe, shulde wedde me
For certaynly, I say for no bobaunce
Yet was I neuer wythout purueyaunce
Of mariage, ne of other thynges eke
I holde a mouses wytte not worth a leke
That hath but one hole to sterten to
And yf that fayle, then is al vdo.
I bare hym on hande he had enchaũted me
My dame taught me soo soth that subtylte
And eke I sayd, I mette of hym al nyght
He wolde a slayne me, as I laye vpryght
And al my bedde was ful of very blood

But yet I hope truely he shulde do me good
For blode betokeneth gold, as I was taught
& al was fals, I demed of him right nauȝt
But as I folowed aye my dames lore
As wel of that, as of other thynges more.
But now syr let me se, what shal I sayne
A ha, by god I haue my tale agayne
when ꝑ my fourth husbande was on bere
I wept algate, and made sory chere
As wyues moten, for it is vsage
And wyth my kerchefe couered my vysage
But for that I was purueyed of a make
I wept but smal, and that I vndertake
To church was my husbād borne on morow
wyth neyghbours, that for hym made sorow
And Jankin our clerke was one of tho
As helpe me god, when that I sawe him go
After the bere, me thought he had a payre
Of legges and of fete, so clene and so fayre
That al my herte I yaue vnto his holde
He was I trowe, twenty wynter olde
And I was fourty, ȝif that I shal saye sothe
But yet I had alway a coltes tothe
Gaptothed I was, & that became me wele
I had the print of dame Venus seele
As helpe me god, I was a lusty one
And fayre, ryche, & yonge, and wel bygone
And truely, as myn husbande tolde me
I had the best quoynte that myght be
For certes I am al fully Venerian
In feelynge, and my herte is Martian
Venus me yaue my lust & my lycorousnesse
And Mars yaue me my sturdy hardynesse
Myn ascendent was Taure, & Mars therin
Alas alas, that euer loue was syn
I folowed aye myne inclination
By vertue of my constellation
That made me I couth not withdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe
Yet haue I Martes marke vpon my face
And also in another preuy place
For god so wysly be my saluation
I loued neuer by no discretion
But euer folowed myne appetyte
Al were he shorte, longe, blacke, or whyte
I toke no kepe, so that he lyked me
Howe poore he was, ne eke of what degre.
what shuld I saye but at ꝑ monethes ende
This ioly clerke Jankin, that was so hende
Hath wedded me wyth great solempnite
And to hym yaf I al the lande and fee
That euer was geuen me here byfore
But afterwarde repented me ful sore
He nolde suffre nothynge of my lyste
By god he smote me ones wyth his fyst
For that I rente out of his boke a lefe
That of that stroke, my eres wern defe
Stubborne I was, as is a lyonesse
And of my tonge a very tangletesse
And walke I wolde, as I had done byforne
From house to house, although he had it sworn
For which ful oft tymes wolde he preche
And me of olde Romayne gestes teche
How he Sulpicius Gallus left his wyfe
And her forsoke, tenne of his lyfe
Not but for open heed he her sey
Lokynge out at his dore on a dey
In other Romayne tolde he me by name
That for his wyfe was at a sommer game
wythout his wetynge, he forsoke her eke
And then wolde he vpon his Bible seke
That ylke prouerbe of Ecclesiaste
where he commaundeth, and forbyddeth faste
Man shal not suffre his wife go royle about
Ne shal not suffre his wife go to pilgrimage
He wolde he say right thus out of doute
He that his house al of salowes
And prycketh his blynde horse ouer ꝑ falowes
And suffreth his wife for to seke hallowes
He is worthy to be hanged on the gallowes
But al for nought, I set not an hawe
Of his prouerbes, ne of his olde sawe
Ne I wolde not of him corrected be
I hate him that my vyces telleth me
And so do mo, god woote, than I
This made him wood wyth me al deuely
I nolde nat forbere him in no cas
Now wol I say you forth by saint Thomas
why that I rent out of his boke a lefe
For which he smote me that I was defe
He had a boke, that gladly nyght and daye
For his desporte, he wolde rede alway
He cleped it Valery, and Theophrast
At which boke he lough alway ful fast
And eke ther was a clerke somtime at Rome
A cardinal, that hight saint Jerome
That made a boke ayenst Jouinian
In which boke there was eke Tertulian
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys
That was abbesse not farre fro Parys
And eke the parables of Salomon
Ouydes arte, and bokes many one
And al these were bounden in one volume
And euery nyght and day was his custome
(when he had leyser and vacation

From

from other worldly occupacioun)
To rede in this boke of wycked wyues
He knewe of hem mo legendes and lyues
Than ben of good women in the Byble
For trusteth wel, it is an impossyble
That any clerke wolde speke good of wyues
But yf it ben of holy sayntes lyues
Ne of non other woman neuer the mo
Who peynted the lyon, tel me who?
By god, yf women had writen stories
As clerkes han, within her oratories (nesse
They wold haue writte of men more wicked
Than al the marke of Adam may redresse
The chyldren of Mercury and Venus
Ben in her worchyng ful contrarious
Mercury loueth wysedom and science
And Venus loueth ryot and dispence
And for her dyuers disposicion
Ech falleth in others exaltacion
And thus god wotte, Mercury is desolate
In Pisces, where Venus is exaltate
And Venus falleth where Mercury is reysed
Therfore no woman of no clerke is prysed
The clerke whan he is old, & may nought do
Of Venus werkes, nat worth his olde shoe
Than sytte he down, and writ in his dotage
That women can nat kepe her mariage
But now we to purpose, why I tolde the
That I was beten for a boke parde
Upon a nyght Jenkin, that was our syre
Redde vpon his boke, as he sate by the fyre
Of Eue fyrst that for her wickednesse
was al mankynde brought to wretchednesse
For which þ Jesu chryst hym selfe was slayn
That bought vs with his herte blode agayn
Lo here expresse of women may ye fynde
That woman was the losse of al mankynde
Tho rad he me how Sampson lost his heeres
Slepyng, his lemā cut hem with her sheres
Thorowe which treson lost he both his eyen
Tho rad he me, yf that I shal nat lyen
Of Hercules, and of his Deianyre
That caused hym to sette hym selfe a fyre
Nothyng forgate he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wyues two
Howe that Xantippe cast pysse on his heed
This sely man sate styl, as he were deed
He wyped his heed, no more durst he sayn
But er the thonder stynt there cometh rayn
Of Pasyphae, that was queene of Crete
For shrewdnesse him thought that tale swete
Fye, speke no more, it is a grisely thynge
Of her horrible lust and her lykyng
Of Clytemnestra for her lechery
That falsely made her husbande for to dye
He rad it with wel good deuocion
He tolde me eke, for what occasyon
Amphiaraus at Thebes lost his lyfe
My husbonde had a legende of hys wyfe
Eriphilem that for an ouche of golde
Hath prively vnto the grekes tolde
where that her husbonde hyd him in a place
For which he had at Thebes sory grace
Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucy
They both made her husbondes for to dye
That one for loue, that other was for hate
Lyma her husbonde on an euyn late
Empoysoned had, for that she was his foe
Lucia lykerous loued her husbonde so
That for he shulde alway vpon her thynke
She gaue hym suche a loue maner drynke
That he was deed, er it were morowe
And thus algates husbondes han sorowe
Than tolde he me, howe one Latumius
Complayned to his felowe Arius
That in his garden growed suche a tree
On whych he sayd, that his wyues three
Honged hem selfe for herte despitous
O lefe brother (q̄ this Arius)
Yeue me a plant of thys blyssful tree
And in my garden planted shal it be.
Of later date of wyues hath he redde
That some han slayn her husbondes in bedde
And let her lechour dight hem al the nyght
whyles that the cors lay in flore vpright
And some had dryue nayles in her brayne
whyles they slepe, & thus they haue he slayn
Some haue yeue hem poyson in her dryncke
He spake more harme than herte may thynke
And therwithal he knewe mo prouerbes
Than in this world there groweth gras or
Bette is q̄ he thyne habitacion (herbes
Be with a lyon, or a foule dragon
Than with a woman vsyng for to chyde
Bette is q̄ he dwelle in the rote to abyde
Than with an angry wife down in an hous
They ben so wicked and so contrarious
They hate, that her husbondes louen aye
He said, a woman cast her shame away
whan she cast of her smocke: and farther mo
A fayre woman, but she be chast also
Is lyke a golde ryng on a sowes nose
who coude wene, or who coude suppose
The wo, that in myne hert was and pyne

And whan I sawe he wolde neuer fyne
To reden on this cursed boke al nyght
Al sodaynly thre leues haue I pluckt
Out of hys boke, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fyst so toke hym on the cheke
That in the fyre he fell backwarde adoun
And vp he sterte, as doothe a wode lyoun
And with his fyst he smote me on myne heed
That in the floore I laye as I were deed
And whan he sey howe stylle that I lay
He was a gast, and wold haue fledde away
Tyl at the last out of my swoun I brayde
Oh, hast thou slayn me false thefe I sayde
For my londe thus hast thou murdred me
Er I be deed, yet wol I ones kysse the
And nere he cam, and kneled faire adoun
And said: dere suster, swete Alysoun
As helpe me god I shal the neuer smyte
That I haue don, it is thy selfe to wyte
Forgeue it me, and that I the beseke
And yet eke ones I hytte hym on the cheke
And sayd: theke, thus moche am I be wreke
Nowe wol I dye, I may no lenger speke.
But at the last, with mokel care and wo
We fel accorded within our seluen two
He yaf me al the brydel in myne honde
To haue the gouernaunce of house & londe
And of hys tonge, and of hys honde also
And made hym bren his boke anon tho
And whan I had goten vnto me
By maistry, al the souerayntè
Than he sayd: myne owen trewe wyfe
Doothe as thou lyste, the terme of al thy lyfe
Kepe thyne honour, and eke myne estate
After that day we had neuer debate
God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde
As any wyfe fro Denmarke vnto Inde
And also trewe, and so was he to me
I praye to god, that sytte in maieste
So blysse hys soule, for his mercy dere
Nowe wol I say my tale yf ye wol here.
¶ The frere lough whan he had herd al this
Nowe dame (quod he) so haue I ioye or blysse
This is a long preamble of a tale
And whan the Sompner herd the frere gale
Lo (quod this sompner) by goddes armes two
A frere wol entermete hym euermo
Lo good men, a fye and eke a frere
wol fal in euery dyshe and eke matere
what spekest thou of preambulacion
what amble or trot, eyther peace or syt a doun
Thou letteſt our disporte in this matere.

¶ Yea woldt thou so syr Sompner (quod the frere)
Nowe by my faye I shal, er that I go
Tel of a Sompner, suche a tale or two
That al the folke shul laugh in this place.
Nowe els frere I beshrewe thy face
(Quod this sompner) and I be shrewe me
But yf I tel tales two or thre
Of freres, er I come to Sittyngbourne
That shal make thyne herte for to murne
For wel I wotte thy pacience is goon.
¶ Our Hoost cried peace, and that anoon
And sayd: Lete the woman tel her tale
Ye fasten as folke, that dronken ben of ale
Do dame, tel forthe your tale, and that is beste
Al redy syr (quod she) right as you leste
If I haue licence of thys worthy frere
Yes dame, tel forthe your tale, I wol it here.

¶ Here endeth the wyfe of Bathes prologue, and here begynneth her tale.

In the olde dayes of kynge Arthoure
(Of which the Britons speken great honour)
Al was thys londe fulfylled of fairy
The Elfe quene, with her ioly company
Daunsed ful ofte in many a grene mede
This was the olde opinyon as I rede
I speke of many an hundred yere a go
But nowe can no man se none elfes mo
For nowe the great charyte and prayers
Of lymytours and other holy freres
That serchen euery lande and euery streme
As thicke as motes in the sonne beme
Blissyng halles, chambres, kichens, & bowres
Cytes burowes, castelles, and hye toures
Thropes, bernes, shepens, and dayries
This maketh, that there ben no fayries
For there as wonte to walke was an elfe
There walketh now the lymytour hym selfe
In vndermeles, and in morwynges
And saythe hys matyns, & hys holy thynges
As he gothe in hys lymitacioun
women may go safely vp and doun
In euery bushe, and vnder euery tre
There nys none other incubus but he
And he ne wyl doone hem no dishonour

And

¶ And so fel it, that this kyng Arthour
Had in his house a lusty bachelor
That on a day came ridyng fro the ryuer
And happed, that alone as he was borne
He sawe a mayde walkyng hym byforne
Of whiche mayde anon, maugre her hede
(By very force) he bereafte her maydenhede
For whiche oppressiõn was such clamour
And such pursute vnto kyng Arthour
That dampned was this knyght to be deed
By course of lawe, & shuld haue lost his heed
(Peraduenture such was the statute tho
But that the quene, and other ladyes mo
So longe prayden the kyng of grace
Tyl he his lyfe grauuted in that place
And yaue hym to the quene, al at her wyl
To chese whether hir she wolde hym saue or spil
The quene thanketh the kyng with al her might
And after this, thus spake she to the knyght
whan she sey her tyme on a day
¶ Thou standest yet, quod she in suche aray
That of thy lyfe yet hastè thou no suerte
I graunte the thy lyfe, if that thou canst tel me
what thyng is it, that women most desyren
Beware, and kepe thy necke bone from yren
And yf thou canste not tel it me anon
Yet wol I yeue the leue for to gon
A twelue moneth and a day, to seke and lere
An answere suffycient in this matere
And suerte wol I haue, er that thou passe
Thy body for to yelde in this place.
¶ Wo was the knyght, & sorowfully he syketh
But what, he may not done al as him lyketh
And at laste he chese hym for to wende
And come ayen, right at the yeres ende
with such answer, as god wold hym puruay
And taketh his leue, & wendeth forth his way
He sercheth euery house and euery place
where as he hopeth for to fynde grace
To lerne, what thyng women louen moost
But he ne couthe arryuen in no coost
where as he myght fynde in this matere
Two creatures accordyng ylere
Some sayd, women loued best rychesse
Some sayd honour, some sayd iolynesse
Some sayd riche aray, some said lust a bedde
And ofte tyme to ben wydowe and wedde.
Some sayd, that our herte is moste y eased
whan that we ben flatered and yplesed
He gothe ful nye the sothe, I wol not lye
A man shal wynne vs best with flaterye
And with attendaunce, and with busynesse
Ben we ylymed bothe more and lesse.
And some men sayn, how that we louen beste
For to ben fre, and do right as vs leste
And that no man repreue vs of our vyce
But say that we be wyse, & nothyng nyce
For trewly there nys none of vs al
If any wight wol clawe vs on the gall
That we nyl kyke, for that he sayth vs sothe
Assay, and he shal fynde it, that so dothe
For be we neuer so vicious within
we wol be holden wyse and clene of syn
And some men sayn, that great delyt haue we
For to ben holde stable and eke secre
And in o purpose stedfastly to dwel
And not bewray thyng that men vs tel
But that tale is not worthe a rake stele
Pardè we women con nothyng hele
witnesse of Midas, wol ye here the tale
¶ Ouyde, among other thynges smale
Said, Midas had vnder his long heeres
Growyng on his heed two asses eeres
The whiche vice he hidde, as he beste myght
Ful subtelly from euery mannes syght
That saue his wyfe, there wist of it no mo
He loued her most, and trusted her also
He prayde her, that to no creature
She nolde tellen of his disfygure.
She swore him nat for al that world to wyn
She nolde do that vilany ne that syn
To make her husbonde haue so foule a name
She nolde not tel it for her own shame
But natheles, her thought that she dyde
That she so long shulde a counsayle hyde
Her thought it swole so sore about her hert
That nedely some worde she most a sert
And syth she durst tellen it to no man
Down to a marris fast by she ran
Tyl she came there, her hert was on a fyre
And as a bittour bumbeth in the myre
She layd her mouth vnto the water adowne
Bewray me nat thou water with thy sowne
Quod she, to the I tel it, and to no mo
My husbonde hath long Asses eres two
Nowe is myne hert al hole, nowe it is out
I myght no lenger kepe it out of dout.
¶ Here mowe ye se, though we a tyme abyde
Yet out it mote, we can no counsayle hyde
The remenaunt of the tale, yf ye wyl here
Redeth Ouyde, and there ye may it lere.
¶ This knight, of which my tale is specially
whan that he sawe, he might not comethereby
This is to say, what women louen moste

within

Within his herte sorowful was hys gost
But home he gothe, he myght nat soiourne
The day was come, he made home returne
And in his way, it happed hym to ryde
In al his cure, vnder a forest syde
Where he fonde vpon a daunce go
Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo
Toward the daūce he drowe hym, & ꝑ verne
In hope that some wysedome shuld he lerne
But certaynly, er that he came fully there
Vanyshed was the daūce, he nyste not where
No creature sawe he that bare lyfe
Save in ꝑ grene, he saw sytting an old wife
A fouler wyght there may no man deuyse
Agayne the knyght the olde wyfe gan aryse
And sayd: syr knight, here forth lyeth no way
Tel me what ye seken by your fay
Paraūenture it may the better be
Thys olde folke conne moche thyng (q̄ she)
¶ My lyfe mother (q̄ thys knyght) certayne
I nam but ded, but yf that I can sayne
What thyng it is, ꝑ wome moste desyre (lyre
Coude ye me wisse, I wolde quite wel your
Plight me thy trouth here in my hōde (q̄ she)
The nexte thyng that I require the
Thou shalte it do, yf it be in thy myght
And I wol tel it you, or it be nyght.
Have here my trouth (q̄ ꝑ knight) I graunt
¶ Than quod she, I may me wel auaunt
Thy lyfe is safe, for I wol stonde therby
Upon my lyfe, the quene wyl say as I
Let se, whiche is the proudest of hem al
That weareth on a kerchefe or a cal
That dare say nay, of that I shal you teche
Let vs go forthe without lenger speche.
Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere
And bade hym to be glad, and have no fere.
¶ Whā they ben come to ꝑ court, thys knyght
Sayd, he had holde his day, as he had hight
And redy was his answere, as he sayde
Ful many a noble wyfe, and many a mayde
And many a wydowe, for that they be wyse
The quene her selfe, sytting as a iustyse
Assembled ben, his answere for to here
And afterwarde this knight was bode apere
To every wight cōmaunded was silence
And that the knyght shulde tel in audyence
That thyng that worldly women loued best
This knyght ne stode not styl as doth a beste
But to his question anon answerde
With manly voyce, that al the court it herde
My liege lady: generally, quod he
Women desyren to have souerayntē
As wel ouer her husbondes as her lous
And for to ben in maystrye hem above
This is your moste desyre, though ye me kyl
Doth as you lyst, I am here at your wyl.
¶ In al the courte nas there wyfe ne mayde
Ne wydowe, that contraried, that he sayde
But sayd, he was worthy han his lyfe.
And with ꝑ worde, vp sterte the olde wyfe
Which ꝑ the knight sonde sytting on ꝑ grene
Mercy (q̄ she) my soueravne lady quene
Er that your court departe do me right
I taught this answere vnto thys knyght
For which he plight me his trouthe there
The fyrst thyng I wolde of hym requere
He wolde it do, yf it lay in his myght
Before the courte than praye I the sir knight
(Quod she) that thou me take vnto thy wyfe
For wel thou woste, that I have kept thy lyfe
If I say false, saye nay vpon thy fay
¶ This knight answerd, alas and welaway
I wote right wel, that such was my behest
For goddes love, chese a newe requeste
Take al my good, and let my body go.
Nay (q̄ she) than I shrewe vs bothe two
For though that I be foule, olde and poore
I nolde for al the metal ne the ore
That vnder erthe is grave, or lythe above
But yf I thy wyfe were and thy love.
¶ My love (q̄ he) nay my dampnation
Alas that any of my nacion
Shulde euer so foule disparaged be
But al for naught, the ende is this, that he
Cōstrayned was, ꝑ nedes must he her wedde
And taketh this olde wyfe, & gothe to bedde
¶ Nowe wolden some men say paraūenture
That for my negligence, I do no cure
To tellen you the ioye and the array
That at the feest was that yke day.
To the which thing answere shortly I shal
I say there was no ioy ne feest at al
There nas but hevynesse and moche sorowe
For prively he wedded her on a morowe
And al day after hydde hym as an oule
So wo was hym, his wife loked so foule
Grete was ꝑ sorowe ꝑ knight had in his thought
Whan he was with his wife a bedde ybrought
He walowed, and turned to and fro.
¶ His olde wyfe lay smylyng euermo
And sayd: O dere husbonde, O benedicite
Fareth every knight thus as ye?
Is this the lawe of kyng Arthours house
Is every

Be euery knyght of this loue so daungerouse
I am your owene loue, and eke your wyfe
I am she, whiche that saued hath your lyfe
And certes yet dyd I neuer you vnryght
Why fare ye thus with me the fyrst nyght
Ye weden lyke a man that had lost hys wytte
Fy, what is my gilte: for gods loue tel me it
And it shal be amended yf I may.
Amended (q this knyght) alas nay nay
That wol not ben amended neuer mo
Thou arte so lothly, and so olde also
And therto comen of so lowe a kynde
That litel wonder is though I walow & wynde
So wolde god (q he) myne herte wold breste.
Is this (q she) the cause of your vnreste
Ye certaynely quod he, no wonder nys.
Nowe syr (q she) I couthe amende al this
If that me lyst, er it were dayes thre
So wel ye myght bere your vnto me.
But for ye spoke of suche gentylnesse
As is dyscended out of olde rychesse
That therfore shullen ye be gentylmen
Suche arrogaunce is not worthe an hen,
Lo who that is moste vertuous alway
Pryuy and aperte, and most entendeth aye
To do the gentyl dedes that he can
Take hym for the grettest gentylman.
Christ wolde we claymed of hym our gentylesse
Not of our eldres, for our olde rychesse
For though they geue vs al her heritage
For which we claymen to ben of hye parage
Yet may they not byquethe, for no thyng
To none of vs, her vertuous lyuyng
That made hem gentylmen yealled be
And badde vs folowen hem in suche degre.
Wel can the wyse poete of Florence
That hyght Dauute, speke in thys sentence
Lo in suche maner ryme is Dauutes tale
Ful selde vp ryseth by his braunches smale
Prowesse of man: for god of his goodnesse
Wol that we clayme of hym oure gentylnesse
For of our eldres may we nothyng clayme
But temporal thyng, that men may hurte & mayme
Eke euery wight wote this as wel as I
If gentylnesse were planted naturally
Vnto a certayne lynage downe the lyne
Pryuy & aperte, than wolde they neuer fyne
To done of gentylnesse the fayre offyce
They myght don no vilanye ne vice.
Take fyre & beare it in to the derkest hous
Betwixt this and the mounte Caucasus
And let men shytte the doores, and go thenne
Yet wol the fyre as fayre lye and brenne
As twenty thousande men myght it beholde
Hys offyce natural aye wol it holde
Vp peryl of my lyfe, tyl that it dye.
Here may ye se wel, howe that gentrye
Is not annexed to possessyon
Sythen folke don not her operacion
Alway as dothe the fyre, lo in hys kynde
For god it wotte, men may ful often fynde
A lordes sonne doone shame and vilanye
And he that wol have prayse of hys gentrye
For he was borne of a gentil house
And had his eldres noble and vertuouse
And nyl hym selfe don no gentil dedes
Ne folowe his gentil auncetre that deed is
He nys not gentyl, be he duke or erle
For vilaynes, synful dedes maketh a cherle
For gentylnesse nys but the renomme
Of thyne auncetres, for her hygh bountie
Whiche is a straunge thyng to thy persone
The gentylnesse cometh fro god alone
Than cometh our very gentylnesse of grace
It was nothyng byqueth vs with our place.
Thynketh howe noble, as sayth Valerius
Was thylke Tullius Hostilius
That out of pouerte rose to hye nobilesse
Redeth Senek, and redeth eke Boece
There shal ye seen expresse, no drede is
That he is gentil, that dothe gentil dedes
And therfore dere husbonde, I thus conclude
Al were it that myne auncetres were rude
Yet may that hye god, and so hope I
Graunt me grace to lyue vertuously
Than am I gentil, whan I begynne
To lyue vertuously, and leuen synne
And there as ye of pouerte me repreue
The hye god, on whom that we byleue
In wylful pouerte chese to lede his lyfe
And certes euery man, mayde, and wyfe
May vnderstonde, Jesu heuen kyng
Ne wolde not chese a vicious lyuyng
Glad pouert is an honest thyng certayne
This wol Senek and other clerkes sayne
Who so wolde hold him payde of his pouerte
I holde hym ryche, al had he not a shyrte
He that coueyteth is a ful poore wyght
For he wolde han, that is not in his myght
But he that naught hath, ne coueyteth to haue
Is ryche, al though ye holde him but a knaue
Very pouert is synne properly
Juuenal sayth of pouert merily
The poore man, whan he gothe by the way
Byfore

Bylongeth therto, he may synge and play
Somer is hateful good and as I gesse
A ful great hynger out of busynesse
A great amender eke of lechorye
To hym that taketh it in pacience
Pouert is, al thoughe it seme elenge
Possession, that no wyght wol chalenge.
Pouerte ful often, when a man is lowe
Maketh hys god and eke hym selfe to knowe
Pouert a spectacle is, as thynketh me
Through which one may his very frendes se
And therfore, syn that I you not greue
Of my pouert, no more me repreue
¶ Nowe syr, eke ye reuyled me
And eerdes syr, though none autorite
Were in no booke, ye gentils of honour
Sayne that men shuld an old wight honour
And clepe hem father for her gentilesse
And autours shal I fynde, as I gesse.
¶ Nowe there as ye sayn, þ I am foule & olde
Than drede you not to ben a cokewolde
For elde, eelde, and foule, also mote I the
Ben great wardeyns upon chastite
But natheles, syn I knowe your delyte
I shal fulfyl your worldly appetyte
Chese nowe (q she) one of these thinges twey
To haue me foule and olde tyl that I dey
And be to you a trewe humble wyfe
And neuer you displease in al my lyfe
Or elis wol ye haue me yonge and fayre
And take your auenture of the repayre
That shal come to your house, bycause of me
Or in some other place, may wel be
Nowe chese your selue, whether þ you lyketh
¶ This knyght auyseth hym, and sore syketh
But at the last, he sayd in this maniere:
My lady and my loue, and wyfe so dere
I put me in your wyse gouernaunce
Chesseth your selfe, which may be most plesaunce
And most honour to you and me also (saue
I do no force whether of the two
For as you lyketh, it suffyseth me.
Thā haue I gote of you þ maistry (q she)
Syn I may chese, & gouerne as my lest
Ye certes wyfe, q he) I holde it for the best.
Kysse me (q she) we ben no lenger wrothe
For by my trouthe, I wol be to you bothe
This is to say, to be bothe fayre & good
I pray to god that I mote sterue wood
But I to you be also good and trewe
As euer was wyfe, sythe þ world was newe
And but I be to morowe as fayre to sene

As any lady, empresse, or quene
That is bytwene the Est & the weste
Dothe with my lyfe right as you leste
Cast up the courtepy, and loke howe it is.
¶ And whan the knyght sawe al this
That she so fayre was, and so yonge therto
For ioy he hente her in his armes two
His herte bathed in a bathe of blysse
A thousande tymes a rowe he gan her kysse
And she obeyed hym in euery thyng
That mought done hym pleasure or lykyng
And thus they lyued vnto her lyues ende
In parfyte ioy: and Jesu Crist vs sende
Husbondes meke, yonge, and freshe a bedde
And grace to ouerlyue hem that we wedde.
And eke I pray to god, to shorte her lyues
That wyl not be gouerned by her wyues
And olde, and angry nygardes of dispence
God sende hem soone a very pestylence.

¶ Here endeth the wyfe of Bathes tale and here begynneth the Freres prologue.

This worthy lymytour, thys noble frere
He made alway a maner louynge chere
Vnto the Sompner, but for honestie
No vilanyes worde as yet to hym spake he
But at the last, he sayd to the wyfe
Dame, god yelde you right good lyfe
Ye haue touched here, also mote I the
In scholematers, a ful great difficulte
Ye haue sayd moche thyng right wel I saye
But dame, here as we ryden by the waye
Vs nedeth not to speken but of game
And leue asyde auctoures a goddes name
To prechyng, and to scholes of clergy.
But yet I pray vnto this compayne
I wol you of a Sompner tel a game
Pardee ye may wel knowe by the name
That of a Sompner may no good be sayde
I pray that none of you be vyel a payde
A Sompner is a renner vp and down
With mandemements, for fornycation
And is pyked at euery townes ende.
Tho spake our host & sayd: sir ye shulde ben
Iolif and gentyl, as a man of your estate (hende
In this compayne we wol no debate

Telleth

Telleth your tale, and let the sompner be
Nay (q the Sompner) let hym say to me
what so hym lyst: whan it cometh to my lote
By god I shal hym quite euery grote
I shal hym tel whiche a great honour
It is to be a flatteryng lymytour
And eke of many an other maner cryme
whiche nedeth not to reherse at this tyme
And hys office I shal hym tel twys
Our hoste answerde: peace, no more of thys
And afterwarde he sayd vnto the frere
Tel forthe your tale, myn owen maister dere.

Here endeth the Freres prologue, and here after followeth his tale.



Whylom there was dwelling in my countre
An archedeken, a man of hye degre
That boldly dyd execution
In punishyng of fornication
Of witchcraft, and eke of baudrie
Of defamation, and auoutrie
Of church reues, and of testamentes
Of contractes, and lacke of sacramentes
Of vsure, and of symonye also
But certes lechours dyd he moche wo
They shulden synge, yf they were hente
And smale tythers, they were foule shent
If any person wolde vpon hem playne
There might astert hem no penuyal payne
For smale tythes, and smal offrynge
He made the people pitously to synge
For er the bishop caught hem with hys hoke
They were in the archedekens booke
And than had he (through hys iurdictyon)
Power to done on hem correction
He had a Sompner redy to his honde
A slyer boye was there none in Englonde
For subtelly he had his espiayle
That taught hym where he myght auayle.
He coulde spare of lechours one or two
To techen hym to foure and twenty mo
For though this sompner wode were as an hare
To tel his harlotrye I wol not spare
For we ben out of hys correction
They haue of vs no iurdiction
Ne neuer shullen, terme of al her lyues.
Peter so ben wommen of the stewes
(q this Sompner) wyst out of our cure
Peace with mischaunce, & with misauenture
Sayd our hoste, and let hym tel hys tale
Now telleth forthe, & let the Sompner gale
Ne spareth not, myne owne maister dere.
This fals theef, this Sompner (q the frere)
Had alway bandes redy to hys honde
As any hauke to lure in Englonde
That telleth hym al the secre that they knewe
For her aquayntaunce was not come of newe
They weren his aduowers priuely
He toke hym selfe a great profyte therby
His maister knewe not alway what he wan
Without maundement, a leude man
He coude somnon, on payne of chrystes curse
And they were glad to fyllen hys purse
And made hym great feestes at the nale
And right as Iudas had purses smale
And was a theef, right suche theef was he
His maister had but halfe his deutie
He was (yf I shal yeuen hym hys laude)
A theef, a sompner, and eke a baude.
He had eke wenches of hys retinue
That whether syr Robert, or syr Hue
Or Johan, or Rafe, or who so that it were
That lay by hem, they tolde it in his eere
Thus were þ wenches and he of one assent
And he wolde fetche a fayned maundement

And sommon hem to the chapitre bothe two
And pylle the man, and let the wenche go
Than wolde he say, frende I shal for thy sake
Do stryken the out of our lettres blake
The dare no more as in this case travayle
I am thy frende, there I may the availe
Certayne he knewe of bribries mo
Than possible is to tel in yeres two
For in this worlde nys dogge for the bowe
That can an hurte dere from an hole knowe
Bet than the Sompner knewe a fyre lechour
Or auoutrer, or elis any paramour
For that was the fruite of al hys rente
Therfore on it he sette al hys entent.
And so befyl that ones on a day
This Sompner wayteynge euer on his pray
Rode for to sommō an old wedowe a ribybe
Fayneyng a cause, for he wolde haue a bribe
And happed that he sawe before hym ryde
A gay yoman vnder a forest syde
A bowe he bare, and arowes bright & sheene
He had vpon him a courtpye of greene
An hatte vpon his heed with stryinges blake
Sir q this sompner, haile and wel fyake
Welcome q he, and euery good felawe
Whider ridest ꝑ vnder this greenwode shawe
Sayd this yoman, wolte thou fette to daye
This sompner hym answerd, and sayd nay
Here fast by (q he) is myne entent
To ryden, for to reysen vp a rent
That longeth to my lordes dewte.
Arte thou than a bayly-ye (q he)
He durst nat than, for very fylth and shame
Say that he was a Sompner, for the name
Departeur q this yoman, lefe brother
Thou arte a bayly, and I am another
I am vnknowen, as in this countre
Of thyne acqueyntaunce I wol pray the
And eke of brotherhed, yf that thou list
I haue golde and syluer in my chest
Yf that ye happe to come in our shyre
Al shal be thyne, right as thou wolt desyre
Grant merey q this sompner, by my faithe
Euerich in other his trouthe laythe
For to be swoine brethern, tyl they dey
And with ꝑ worde they riden forth her wey
This sompner wh that, was as ful of iangles
As ful of venym, as ben these wariangles
And euer enquyring vpon euery thyng
Brother q he, where is your dwellyng
Another day, yf that I shulde you seche
This yoman hym answerde in soft speche
Brother q he, ferre in the North countre
Where as I hope sometyme I shal the se
Or we departe, I shal the so wel wysse
That of myne house thou shalte neuer mysse
Now brother q this sompner, I you pray
Teche me, whyle we ryden by the way
Sith that ye ben a bayly, as am I
Some subtelte, tel me faythfully
In myne office, howe I may most wynne
And spareth nat for conscience ne for synne
But as my brother, tel me howe don ye
Nowe by my trouth brother dere sayd he
As I shal tellen the a faithful tale
My wages ben ful strayte and smale
My lorde is harde to me and daungerous
And myne office ful laborous
And therfore by extorcion I lyue
Forsothe al that men wol me yeue
Algate by sleyght or by violence
Fro yere to yere, I wyn al my dispence
I can no better telle faithfully
Nowe certes q this sompnour, so fare I
I spare nat to take god it wote
But yf it be to heuy or to hote
That I may getten in counsayle priuely
No maner conscience of that haue I
Nere myne extorcion I myght not lyuen
Of suche tapes wol I nat be shriuen
Stomake ne conscience knowe I non
I shrewe al these shrift fathers euerichon
Wel be we met by god and swete saynt Jame
But lefe brother, tel me thy name
Quod this sompner, in thys meane whyle
This yoman gan a lytel for to smyle
Brother q he, wolte thou that I the tele
I am a fende, my dwellyng is in hel
And here I ride about my purchasyng
To wete where I may gete any thyng
My purchase is the effecte of al my rent
Loke howe thou ridest for the same entent
To wynne good, thou rekkest neuer howe
Right so fare I, for ride wol I nowe
Vnto the worldes ende for a pray
Ah, q this sompner, benedicite, what ye say
I wende ye were a woman trewly
Ye haue a mannes shappe as wel as I
Haue ye a figure than determynate
In hel, there ye ben in your estate
Nay certaynly q he, there haue we non
But whan vs lyketh, we can take vs one
Or elis make you seme we ben shape
Somtyme lyke a man or lyke an ape

Or lyke

Or lyke an Angel can I ryde or go
It is no wonder thyng though it be so
A lousy iuggler can deceyue the
And parde yet can I more crafte than he
why q the Sompnour, ryde ye thā or gon
In sondrie shappe, and nat alway in one
For we q he, wol vs suche forme make
As most able is our prayes for to take
what maketh you to haue al this labour
Ful many a caule lete fyn Sompnour
Sayd this fende, but al thyng hath tyme
The day is shorte, and it is passed pryme
And yet ne gate I nothyng in this day
I wol entende to wynnyng, yf that I may
And nat entende our wyttes to declare
For brother myne, thy wyttes ben al to bare
To vnderstand al, though I wolde tel he the
But for thou askest why labouren we
For somtyme be we goddes instrumentes
And meanes to don his cōmaundementes
what that hym lyst on his creatures
In dyuers arte and in dyuers figures
Withouten hem we haue no might certayn
yf that him lyst to stonden there agayn
And somtyme at our prayre haue we leue
Onely the body, and nought the soule to greue
Witnesse of Job, whom we deden wo
And somtyme haue we myght of bothe two
This is to sayn, of body and soule eke
And somtyme we ben suffred for to seke
Vpon a man, and don his soule vnrest
And nat his body, and al is for the best
Whan he withstandeth our temptation
It is a cause of hys saluation
Al be it that it was nat our entent
He should be safe, but that we wolde him hent
And somtyme be we seruauntes vnto man
As the archibysshoppe sayntt Dunstan
And to the Apostel eke seruaunt was I
Yet tel me q this Sompnour faithfully
Make ye you newe bodies thus alway
Of elementes, the fende answered nay
Somtyme we fayn, and somtyme we aryse
With deed bodies in sondrie wise
And speke as reasonably fayre and wel
As the Pythonesse dyd to Samuel
And yet wolde some men say it was nat he
I do no force of your deuynite
But o thyng I warne the, I wol nat iape
Thou wolte algates wete howe we be shape
Thou shalt hereafterwardes my brother dere)
Come, where the nedeth nat of me to lere
For thou shalt by thyne owen experience
Conne in the chaire rede of thys sentence
Bette than Vergyl, while he was on lyue
Or Dauit also. Nowe lette vs ride blyue
For I wol holde company with the
Tyl it be so that thou forsake me
Nay q this sompnour, that shal nat betide
I am a yoman knowen ful wyde
My trouth wol I holde to the, as in this caas
For though thou were the deuyll Sathanas
My trouth wol I holde to my brother
As I am swore, and eche of vs to other
For to be trewe brother in this caas
And brother, we gon to our purchaas
Take thou thy parte, what men wol the yeue
And I shal myne, and thus shal we both leue
And yf that any of vs haue more than other
Let him be trew, and parte it with his brother
I graunt q the deuyl, by my fay
And with that worde they riden forth her way
And right at thentrynge of the townes ende
(To which the sompner shope him for to wende)
They sawe a carte, that charged was with hay
which that a carter droue forth on his way
Depe was the way, for which the carte stode
This carter smote, and cryed as he were wode
Hayt scot hayt brok, what spare ye for the stones
The fende q he, you fetch both body and bones
As ferforth as euer ye were yfoled
So moche wo as I haue for you tholed
The deuyl haue al, both horse, carte, and hay
q this sompnour, here shal we haue a pray
And nere the fende he drew, as nought ne were
Fyl prestly, and rowned in his ere
Herken brother hether, by thy fayth
Herest thou what the carter saith
Hent it anon, for he hath yeue it the
Both hay and carte, and eke his capies thre
Nay q the deuyl, god wotte neuer a dele
It is nat his entent trust me wele
Axe him thy selfe, yf thou trowest nat me
Or els stynt a whyle and thou shalte se.
This carter thacked his horse on the croupe
And they begon to drawe and to stoupe
Hayt nowe q he, that Jesu christ you blesse
And al his handy werke both more and lesse
That was wel ywraught myn owen lyard boy
I pray god saue the and saynt Loye
Nowe is my carte out of the slowe parde.
Lo brother q the fende, what tolde I the
Here may ye seen myn owne dere brother
The carle spake o thyng but he thought another

Lette vs go forth about our biage
Here wyll we nothyng vpon cariage
whā þ they come somwhat out of þ towen
Thys Sompner to his brother gan to rown
Brother q he, here wonneth an olde rebecke
That had almoste as lefe to lese her necke
As for to yeue a peny of her good
I wol haue xij. pens tho that she were wood
Or I wol sompne her to our offyce
And yet god woote of her knowe I no vyce
But for thou canst nat, as in this countre
poynne thy coste, take here ensample of me.
This Sōpner clappeth at þ wedowes gate
Come out he sayd, thou olde verrytate
I trowe thou hast some frere or preest wt the
who clappeth ther said this wife, benedicite
God saue you syr, what is your swete wyl
I haue q he, of sommōs of the here a syl
Up payne of cursyng loke that thou be
To morowe before our Archdeacons kne
To answere to the court of certayn thynges
Nowe lorde q she, Jesu kyng of kynges
So wisely helpe me, as I ne may
I haue ben sycke, and that ful many a day
I may nat go so ferre, q she, ne ryde
But I be dede, so pricketh it in my syde
May I nat aske a libel syr Sompnour
And answere there by my procteur
To suche thyng as men wolde appōsen me
Yes q this Sompnour, paye anon let se
Twelfe pens to me, and I wyl the acquyte
I shal no profyte haue therof but lyte
My maister hath the profyte, and nat I
Come of and lette me ryden hastely
Gyue me xij. pens I may no lenger tary
Twelf pens q she, lady saynt Mary
So wisely helpe me out of care and synne
This wyde world though I should it wynne
Ne haue I nat xij. pens within my holde
Ye knowe wel, that I am poore and olde
Kepeth your almesse on me poore wrecche
Nay than q he, the foule fende me fetche
yf I the excuse, though thou shuldest be spyt
Alas q she, god woote yet haue I no gyt
Paye me q he, or by swete saynt Anne
I wol bere away thy newe panne
For dette, whiche thou owest me of olde
whan thou madest thyne husbonde cokolde
I payde at home for thy correction
Thou lyest q she, by my saluation
Ne was I neuer er nowe, wedowe ne wyfe
Sompned vnto your court in al my lyfe
Ne neuer I nas but of my body trewe
Vnto the deuyl blacke and rough of hewe
Yeue I thy body and my panne also.
And whan the deuyl herde her curse so
Upon her knees, he sayd in this manere
Nowe mayly, myne owne mother dere
Is this your wyl in ernest that ye seye
The deuyl q she, wote hym er I dey
And pan and al, but he wol hym repent.
Nay olde stotte, that is nat myne entent
Quod this Sompner, for to repent me
For any thyng that I haue had of the
I wolde I had thy smocke and euery clothe.
Nowe brother q the deuyl, be nat wrothe
Thy body and this pan is myne by right
Thou shalt with me to hel yet to nyght
where thou shalte knowen of our pryuete
More than a maister of deuynite
And with þ worde the foule fende hym hent
Body and soule, he with the deuyl went
where that Sompnours haue their heritage
And god that made after hys ymage
Warkynde, saue and gyde vs al and some
And leue the sompnour good man to become
Lordinges I could haue told you q this frere
Had I had leyser, of this Sompnour here
After the text of Crist Poule, and John
And of other doctours many one
Suche peynes, as your hertes myght agryse
Albeit so, that no tonge may it deuyse
Though þ I might a thousande wynter tel
The peynes of that cursed house of hel
But for to kepe vs fro that cursed place
Wake, and prayeth Jesu of hys grace
So kepe vs from the temptour Sathanas
Herkeneth this worde, beware as I this caas
The lyon sytteth in his awayte alway
To slee the innocent, yf that he may
Dispoyleth aye your hertes to withstonde
The fende, þ you wolde make thral & bonde
He may not tempte you ouer your myght
For Crist wol be your champion & knyght
And prayeth, that this sompnour him repēte
Of hys mysdede, er that the fende hym hente.

Here endeth the Frerestale, and begynneth the Sompners prologue.

This

THis Sompner in his styropes
hye stode
Upon this frere, his herte was
so wode
That lyke an aspē leefe he quoke
for ire
Lordynges (quod he) but one thyng I desyre
I wol beseche, that of your curtesy
Sythens ye han herde this false frere lye
As shulleth me I may my tale tell
This frere boosteth that he knoweth hell
And god woote that is lyttel wonder
Freres and fendes ben but lyttel asonder
For parde, ye han often tyme herde tell
Howe that a frere ravyshed was to hell
In spyrit ones by a visyoun
And as an angel ledde hym up and doun
To shewe hym the peynes that there were
In al the place sawe he not a frere
Of other folke he sawe ynowe in wo
Unto the aungel spake the frere tho
Nowe syr quod he, han freres swiche a grace
That none of hem shal come in this place?
Yes quod this aungel, many a myllyoun
And unto Sathanas ladde he hym adoun
And nowe hath Sathanas swiche a tayle
Broder than of a Carrike is the sayle
Holde up thy tayle thou Sathanas (quod he)
Shewe forthe thyn ers, let the frere se
Where is the nest of freres in this place
And er that halfe a furlonge way of space
(Right as bees swarmen out of an hyve)
Out of the devels ers they gan dryve
Twenty thousande freres on a route
And throughout hell swarmed al about
And comen ayen, as faste as they might gon
And into his ers they crepten everychon
He clapte hys tayle ayen, and lay styl.
This frere, whan he loked had his fyl
Upon the torments of thys sory place
His spyrite god restored of hys grace
Unto hys body ayen, and he awoke
But natheles, yet for fere he quoke
So was the devels ers ay in hys mynde
That is his heritage of very kynde
God save you al save this cursed frere
My prologue wol I ende in this manere.

Here endeth the Sompners prologue, and followeth his tale.



LOrdynges ther is in Yorkshyre
as I gesse
A mershy countrey called Holder-
nesse
In whiche there went a lympi-
tour about
To preach, and eke to begge, it is no doute
And so byfel that on a day this frere
Had preched in a church in his manere
And specially aboven every thyng
Exhorted he the people in his preching
To trentals, and to yeven for goddes sake

Wherwith men myghte holy houses make
There as thayne ferueyse is honoured
Not there as it is wasted and deuoured
Nether there as nede is not for to be yeuen
As to possessioners that mowen eis lyuen
Thonked be god, in wele and habundaunce
Trentals delyuereth (sayde he) fro penaunce
Her frendes soules, and hem self also
Ful harde it is with sothe hoke or no oules
To hem pleased, as to myne or bake
Nowe speedeth you hastely for Cristes sake.

And whan this frere had said al his entent
With qui cum patre, forthe his way he went
Whe folke i church had yeue him what he lest
He went his way, no lenger wolde he rest
With scryppe & typped staffe, ytucked hye
In euery house he gan to pore and prye
And begged mele and chese, or eis corne
His felowe had a staffe typped with horne
A payre of tables al of Ivory
And a poyntel polished fetously
And wrote alway the names as he stoode
Of al folke, that yaue hym any goode
Alhaunce as he wolde for hem prey
Peue bs a bushel wheate, malte or rey
A goddes kychel, or a tryppe of chese
Or eis what ye lyst, I may not chese
A goddes halfpeny, or a masse peny
Or peue bs of your blawne, yf ye haue any
A dagon of your blanket, leue dame
Our sustter dere, lo here I write your name
Bacon or bese, or suche thyng as ye fynde
A sturdy harlot went hem ay behynde
That was her hostes man, and bare a sacke
And that me yaue hem, layde it on his backe
And whan he was out at the doze anone
He planed away the names euerychone
That he before had written in his tables
He serued hem with nyses and with fables
Nay there thou lyest Sompner (q the frere)
Peace (q our host) for Cristes moder dere
Tel forthe thy tale, and spare it not at al
So thryue I q the Sompner, so I shal
So longe he went fro hous to house til he
Came to an house, ther as he was wont to be
Refreshed more than in an hundred places
Sicke lay the good man, beholde the caces is
Bedred vpon a couche lowe he lay
Deus hic (q he) O Thomas frend good day
Sayd this frere, curtesly and softe
Thomas god yelde it you, ful ofte
Haue I vpon this benche faren ful wele
Here haue I eaten many a mery mele
And fro the benche he drone away the catte
And layde adowne hys potent and his hatte
And eke his scryppe, & set hym softe adowne
His felowe was go walked in to the toune
Forthe with his knaue, in to that hostelrye
Where as he hope hym that like night to lye.
O dere maister, quod this sycke man
Howe haue ye faren sythen Marche began
I sawe you not this fourtenight and more.
God wot, q he, laboured haue I ful sore
And specially for thy saluacion
Haue I said many a precious sermon
And for our other frendes, god hem blesse
I haue this day ben at your churche at messe
And sayd a sermon, after my symple wytte
Not al after the text of holy writte
For it is harde to you, as I suppose
And therfore I wol teche you al the glose
Glosyng is a glorious thyng certayne
For letter sleeth, as we clerkes sayne
There haue I hem taught to ben charitable
And spende her good there as it is reasonable
And there I sawe our dame, a where is she
Ponder in the yerde, I trowe she be
Sayd this man, and she wol come anon
Ey mayster welcom ye be by sayint John
Sayd this wyfe, howe fare ye hertely
This frere aryseth vp ful curtesly
And her embraseth in his armes narowe
And kysseth her swetely, & cheketh as a spar
Wth his lippes, dame q he right wele I fare
As he that is your seruaunt euery dele
Thanked be god, that you yaue soule & lyfe
Yet sawe I not this day so fayre a wife
In al the churche, so god saue me
Ye god amende al faultes syr (q she)
Algates welcome ye be, by my fay
Graut mercy dame, y haue I founde alway
But of your great goodnesse, by your leue
I wol pray you, that ye not you greue
I wol with Thomas speke a lytel throwe
These curates ben ful negligent & slowe
To gropen tenderly a mannes conscience
In schrift, & in preching is my diligence
And to studye on Peters wordes & Poules
I walke to fysshe christen mennes soules
To yelde Jesu Christ his propre rent

To spede hys wrytynges, is al myne entent.
¶ Nowe by your leue dere maysters (q̄ he)
Chyderth hym wel for sayut charite
He is as angry as a pylle myne
Though that he haue al that he can deſyre
Though I hit my swyche, & make hi warme
And euer hym lay my legge a myne arme
He groneth lyke our boye q̄ lyeth in the fye
Other dyſeaſe of hym vyght none haue I
I may not pleaſe hym in no maner cauſe
O Thomas, je vo⁹ die, Thomas Thomas
This maketh q̄ fende, this must ben amended
Ire is a chynge that god hyghly defended
And therof wol I speake a worde or two.
¶ Now maysters (q̄ the wyfe) er that I go
What wol ye dyner I wol go ther aboute.
Now dame (q̄ he) je vous die sans doute
Haue I not of a capon but the lyuer
And of your whyte bred, but a shyuer
And after that a rosted pygges heed
(But I nolde not for me no beeſt were deed)
Then had I myster for my ſuſtynaunce
I am a man of lyteel ſuſtynaunce
My ſpirite hath hys ſoiourny in the byble
My body is aye so redy and so penyble
To wake, that my body is dyſtroyde
I pray you dame, be ye nought anoyde
Though I so frendly you my counſaile shewe
By god, I nolde haue told it vnto a fewe.
¶ Nowe ſyr (q̄ she) but one worde er ye go
My chylde is deed, within these weekes two
Sone after that ye wente out of thys toun
Hys death sawe I by reuelacioun
Lyeth thys frere, at home in our dortoure
I dare wel sayne, er that halfe an houre
After hys death, I sawe hym borne to blyſſe
In myne auiſioun, god me so wyſſe
So dyd our ſexten, and our fermerere
That han ben true freres thys fyfteene yere
They may now, god be thanked of hys lone
Walken he: vnbeſy, and wanken alone
And vp I aroſe, and al our couente ehe
With many a teere treylynge on our cheke
Without noyſe or clateryage of belles
Te deum was our ſonge, and nothinge elles
Saue that to Chriſt I sayd an oriſon
Thankynge hym of my reuelacion
For ſyr and dame, trusteth me vyght wel
Our oriſons ben more effectuel
And more we ſene of Chriſtes ſecret thinges
Than bodel folke, although they were kynges
We lyue in pouerte, and in abſtinence
And bodel folke in ryches and dyſpence
In meate & drynke, and in her foule delyte
We han thys worldly luſte al in dyſpyte
Lazar and Dines, lyueden dyuerſly
And dyuers guerdons had they therby
Who so wol pray, he muſte faſte & be clene
And fatte hys ſoule, & make hys body lene
We fare as sayth the apoſtle, cloth and foode
Ouſhyſeth vs, though they be not ful goode
The clenneſſe & the faſtynge of vs freres
Maketh that Chriſt accepteth our prayeres.
¶ Lo Moyſes, fourty dayes & fourty nyght
Faſted, er that the hye god of hys myght
Spake wyth hym in the mounte of Synay
With empty woombe, faſtynge many a day
Receyued he the lawe, that was wryten
With goddes fynger, & holy wel ye witten
In mount Horeb, er he had any ſpeche
With the hygh god, that is our ſoules leche
He faſted longe, and was in contemplaunce.
¶ Aaron, q̄ had the temple in gouernaunce
And eke the other prieſtes euerychone
Into the temple when they ſhulde gone
To prayen for the people, and done ſeruyce
They nolde drynke in no maner wyſe
No drynke, that dronke myght hem make
But there in abſtinence praye and wake
Leſt that they deden take hede what I saye
But they be ſobre that for the people praye
Wate that I saye, no more for it ſuffyſeth
Our lorde Jeſu, as holy wryte deuyſeth
Yaue vs enſample of faſtynge and prayers
Therfore we mendicantes, we ſely freres
Ben wedded to pouerte and continence
To charite, humbleneſſe, and abſtinence
To perſecution for vyghtwyſneſſe
To wepynge, myſericorde and clenneſſe
And therfore maye ye ſe that our prayeres
(I ſpeke of vs mendicant, we freres)
Ben to the hye god more acceptable
Than yours, wyth your feeſt at your table.
¶ Fro Paradyſe fyrſt, yf I ſhal not lye
Was man outchaſed for hys gloſonye
And chaſt was man in paradyſe certayn
But herken yow Thomas what I ſhal sayn
I haue no terte therof, as I ſuppoſe
But I fynde it in maner of a gloſe
That ſpecially our ſoueryne lorde Jeſus
Spake thys by freres, when he ſayd thus
Bleſſed be they that poore in ſpirite bene
And so forth al the goſpel maye ye ſene
Whether it be lyker our perfection

Of hem that flaymmen in poſſeſſion
Fye on her pompe, and on her glotonye
And for her lechirie, I hem defye
Me thynketh they be lyke Jouinian
Fatte as a whale, and walowynge as a ſwan
All vinolent as botel in the ſpence
Her prayers is of ful lytel reuerence
whan they ſor ſoules ſay ꝑ pſalme of Dauid
Lo bonelle they ſayn (Cor meum eructauit)
who ſoeuer wyll Chriſtes goſpel ꝛ hys lore
But we that humble be, chaſte, and poore
Workers of goddes worde, & not auditours
Therfore ryght as an hauke at a ſoure
Up ſpryngeth into the eyre, ſo prayeres
Of charitable and chaſt buſy freres
Maken her ſoure to goddes eeres two
Thomas Thomas, ſo mote I ryde or go
And by that lorde that cleped is ſayne Pyue
Ne ꝑ our brother were, ꝑ ſhuldeſt not thryue
For in our chapiter pray we daye and nyght
To Chriſt that he the ſende heith & myght
Thy body for to welden haſtely.
God wote q he, nothynge therof fele I
As helpe me Chriſt, as in fewe yeres
Haue I ſpended vpon dyuers maner freres
Wel many a pounde, yet fare I neuer the bette
Certayne my good haue I almoſt beſette
Fare wel my good, for it is almoſte ago.
The frere anſwered, o Thomas doſt ꝑ ſo
What nedeth the dyuers freres ſeche
What nedeth him that hath a parfyte leche
To ſechen other leches in the toune
Your inconſtaunce is your confuſioun
Holde ye me then, or els our couent
To prayen for you inſufficient
Thomas, that ſaye nys not worth a myte
Your maladye is for we haue to lyte
A, yeue that couent halfe a quarter otes
And yeue that couent foure & twenty grotes
And yeue that frere a penny, and let hym go
Nay nay Thomas, it may nothynge be ſo
What is a ferthyng worth parted in twelue
Lo, eche thynge that is oned in hym ſelue
Is more ſtronge then when it is ſo ſcatered
Thomas, of me thou ſhalt not ben yflatered
Thou woldſt haue al our labour for nought
The hye god ꝑ al thys world hath wrought
Sayeth, ꝑ the workman is worthy his hyre
Thomas, nought of your treaſoure I deſyre
As for my ſelfe, but that al our couent
To prayen for you is aye ſo dylygent
And for to buylden Chriſtes owne chyrche
Thomas, yf ye wol lerne for to wyrche
Of buyldynge vp of chyrches may ye fynde
yf it be good, in Thomas lyfe of Inde.
Ye lyggen here ful of anger and of yre
with which ꝑ deuel ſtereth your hert on fyre
And chyden here thys holy innocent
Your wyfe, that is ſo meke and pacient
And therfore trowe me Thomas if you leſt
Ne chyde not wyth thy wyfe, as for the beſt
And beare thys worde alwaye by thy fayth
Touchynge ſuch thing, lo what ꝑ wyſe ſayth
wythin thy houſe be thou no lyon
To thy ſubiectes do thou none oppreſſion
Ne make not thyne acquayntaunce to flee
And yet Thomas, eſtſones charge I the
Beware of her that in thy boſome ſlepeth
ware the of the ſerpent, that ſo ſlyly crepeth
Under the graſſe, and ſtyngeth ful ſubtelly
Beware my ſonne, and herken pacyently
That twenty thouſande men han loſt her lyues
For ſtryuynge with her lemans & her wyues
Nowe ſens ye haue ſo holy and meke a wyfe
what nedeth you Thomas to make ſtryfe
There nys ywyſſe no ſerpent ſo cruel
(when men treden on his tayle) ne halfe ſo fell
As a woman is, whe ſhe hath caught an yre
Vengeaunce is then al her deſyre.
Ire is a ſynne, one of the greateſt of ſeuen
Abhominable vnto the hygh god of heuen
And to hym ſelfe it is a deſtruction
Thys euery leude vycare and perſon
Can ſaye, how yre engendreth homecyde
Ire is in ſoth the executour of pryde
I couthe of yre ſay ſo muche ſorowe
That my tale ſhuldē laſt yet to morowe
And therfore I pray god both daye & nyght
That no vertuous man be ſende lyghtly myght
It is great harme, and eke great pyte
To ſet an vyous man in hye degre

Whylom there was an vyous potestate
As ſayeth Seneke, that duryng hys eſtate
Upon a daye out rydden knyghtes two
And as fortune wolde it ſhuldē be ſo
That one of hem cam home, ꝑ other nought
Anone the knyght before ꝑ iudge is brought
That ſaid thus, thou haſt thy felowe ſlayne
For whych I deme the to the death certayne
And to another knyght cōmaunded he
Go lede hym to the death I charge the
And it hapned as they went by the wey
Towarde the place where he ſhuldē dey

The

The knyȝt came, which ink wolde had be dede
Then thought they it was the beſt rede
To lede them both to the iudge agayne
They ſayde lorde, the knight hath not ſlayne
Hys felowe, here he ſtande hole alyue.
Ye ſhullen be deed (q he) ſo mote I thryue
That is to ſaye, both one, two, and thre,
And to the fyrſt knyght, ryght thus ſpake he.
I dampned the, thou muſt algate be deed
And thou muſte alſo leſe nedes thyne heed
For thou arte cauſe why thy felowe deyth
And to ꝑ thylde knyght, ryght thus he ſeyth
Thou haſt not done that I cõmaunded the
And thus he dyd hem ſlayne al thre.

Iroude Cambyſes was eke dronkelewe
And eke delyted hym to ben a threwe
And ſo byfel a lorde of hys meyne
That loued wel vertuous moralite
Sayd on a day betwyxt hem two right thus
A lorde is loſt, yf he be aught vicious
And dronkennelle eke is a foule recorde
Of any man, and namely of a lorde
There is many an eye and many an eere
Awaytynge on a lorde, he notte where
For goddes loue drynketh more temperatly
Wyne maketh a man to leſe wretchedly
Hys mynde and hys lymmes euerychone.
¶ The reuers ſhalte thou ſe, q he anone
And preue it by thyne owne experience
That wyne ne doth to folke no ſuch offence
There nys no wyne byreueth me my myght
Of honde, of foote, ne of myne eye ſyght
And for dyſpyte he dronke mochel more
An hundred tymes then he dyd before
And ryght anone, thys curſed vyleyns wretch
Let thys knyghtes ſonne byforne hym fetch
Cõmaunding hym he ſhulde byforne hym ſtõde
And ſodaynly he toke hys bowe in honde
And vp the ſtrynge he pulled to hys eere
And wyth an arowe he ſlough ꝑ childe there
Now whether haue I a ſelker hõde or none
Q he is al my myght and mynde agone:
Hath wyne byreued me myne eyen ſyght:
¶ What ſhulde I tel the anſwere of ꝑ knyght
Hys ſõne was ſlayne, there is no more to ſay
Beware therfore, wyth lordes howe ye play
Syngc Placebo, and I ſhal yf I can
But yf it be vnto a poore man
To a poore man, one ſhulde hys vyces tel
But not to a lorde, though he ſhuld go to hel.

Lo yrous Cirus, thylke Perſien
Howe deſtroyed he the ryuer of Gyſen:
For that an horſe of hys was dreynt therin
When he went Babylon to wynne
He made that the ryuer was ſo ſmal
That men myght ryde and waden ouer al.
¶ Lo, what ſayd he, that ſo wel teche can
Ne be no felowe to none yrous man
Ne wyth no wode man walke by the way
Leſte thou repente, I wol no farther ſay.
¶ Now thomas leue brother, leaue thyn yre
Thou ſhalt me fynde as iuſte, as is a ſquyre
Hold not the dryuels knyfe aye in thyne herte
Thyne angre doth the al to ſore ſmerte
But ſhewe to me al thy confeſſion.
¶ Nay q the ſycke man, by ſaynt Symon
I haue be ſhryue thys day of my curate
I haue tolde hym al myne eſtate
It nedeth nomore to ſpeke of it, ſayeth he
But yf me lyſt, of myne humilite.
yeue me thẽ of thy gold, to make our cloiſtre
q he, for many a muſkle & many an oyſtre
When other men haue ben ful wel at eſe
Hath ben our foode, our cloyſtre for to reſe
And yet god wote, vnneth the foundament
Parfourned is ne of our pauement
Is not a tyle yet wythin our wones
To god we owe fourty pounde for ſtones
Now helpe thomas, for him ꝑ harowed hell
For els mote we our bokes ſell
And yf you lacke our predicacion
Then goeth thys worlde al to dyſtruction
For who ſo wol fro thys worlde vs byreue
So god me ſaue, Thomas by your leue
He wolde byreue out of this world the ſonne
For who can techen & worchen, as we conne
And that is not of lytel tyme (q he)
But ſyth Helye was, or Helyſe
Han freres ben, that fynde I of recorde
In charite, ythanked be our lorde
Now Thomas, for ſaynt charite
And downe anone he ſytteth on hys kne
¶ Thys ſycke mã wore nye woode for yre
He wolde the frere had ben a fyre
wyth hys falſe dyſſimulation
Suche thynges as ben in my poſſeſſyon
(q he) that may I yeue, and none other
Ye ſayn me thus, howe ꝑ I am your brother
Ye certes q thys frere, truſteth me wele
I toke our dame our lettre and our ſele.
¶ Nowe (q he) wel, & ſomwhat ſhal I yeue
Unto your holy couent whyle I lyue

And

And in thyne honde, thou shal it haue anone
On thys condicion, and other none
That thou departe it so, my leue brother
That euery frere, haue as moche as other
Thys shalt thou swere on thy profession
Wythout fraude or cauelacion.
¶ I swere it (q the frere) by my faythe
And therwithal hys hande in hys he layethe
Lo here my fayethe, in me shalbe no lacke.
¶ Then put thyne hãde downe by my backe
Sayd thys man, and grope well behynde
Vpneth my buttocke, there thou shalt fynde
A thynge, that I haue hydde in pryuyte
Ah, thought the frere, that shal go with me
Adowne he stoketh hys honde to the clyfte
In hope to fynde there some good gyfte
And when thys sycke man felte thys frere
Aboute hys towel, gropynge here and there
Anyd hys honde, he let the frere a farte
There nys no capel, drawynge in a carte
That myght haue let a farte of such a soun.
¶ The frere vp starte, as doth a wode lyon
A false churle (q the frere) for goddes bones
Thys hast thou in dyspyte do, for the nones
Thou shalte abye thys farte, yf I may
Hys meyny, that herde of thys afraye
Came lappyng in, and chased out the frere
And forth he goeth, wyth a ful angry chere
And fette hys felowe, there as laye his stoze
He loked as he were a wylde boze
He grynted hys teth, so was he wrothe
A sturdy pace, downe to the court he gothe
where as there wõned a mã of great honour
To whom that he was alway confessour
This worthy man was lorde of that vylage
Thys frere came, as he were in a rage
where as thys lorde sate eatyng at his boorde
Vnnethes myght the frere speke o worde
Tyl at the laste he sayd, god you se.
¶ Thys lorde gan loke, and sayd benedicite
what frere I ho, what maner a world is this
I se wel that sõmthynge is amys
ye loke as though ỳ wod were ful of theues
Syt downe, and tel me what your greefe is
And it shalbe amended, yf that I may.
¶ I haue (q he) had a dyspyte to day
God yelde it you, adowne in your vyllage
That in this world, is none so poore a page
That he nolde haue abhominacioun
Of that I haue rereaned in your toun
And yet me greueth nothynge so sore
As that the olde churle, wyth lockes hore
Blasphemed hath our holy couent eke.
¶ Now mayster (q thys lorde) I you beseke
No mayster syr (q he) but seruitour
Though I haue had in schole that honour
God lyketh not, that men vs Raby calle
Neyther in market, ne in your large halle
No force (q he) but tel me of your greefe
¶ Syr (q thys frere) an odious mischefe
Thys day is betyde, to myne ordre, & to me
And so per consequens to eche degre
Of holy churche, god amende it sone.
Syr (q the lorde) ye wote what is to done
Dystempre you not, ye ben my confessour
ye ben the salte of the earth and the sauour
For goddes loue your pacience nowe holde
Telleth me your greefe: & he anone him tolde
As ye han herde before, ye woste well what
The lady of the house, aye styll satte
Tyl she had herde what the frere sayde
Eye goddes mother (q she) o blyssful mayde
Is there nought els, tel me faythfully
Madame (q he) howe thynketh ye therby
Howe that me thynketh: so god me spede
I saye a churle hath done a churles dede
what shulde I saye, god let hym neuer the
Hys sycke heed is ful of vanite
I holde hym in a maner of frenesye.
Madame (q he) by god I shal not lye
But I in any wyse may ben on hym awreke
I shal saunder him ouer al, where I speke
That false blasphemour, that charged me
To parte it, that myght not departed be
To euery man lyche, wyth myschaunce
The lorde sate styl, as he were in a traunce
And in hys herte he rolled vp and doun
Howe that thys churle had ymaginacioun
To shewe suche a probleme to the frere
Neuer erst or now ne herde I such a matere
I trowe the dyuel put it in hys mynde
In al Arsinetryke, there shal no man fynde
Before thys daye, of suche a questiõ
who shulde make a demonstracion:
That euery man shulde lyke haue his parte
Of a sowne or sauoure of a farte
O nyce proude churle, I shrewe thy face
Lo syrs (q the lorde) with harde grace
Who euer heerde of such a thynge or herde
To euery man lyke tell me howe:
It is an impossyble, it may not be
Fy nyce churle, evyl let hym neuer the
The rumblynge of a farte, and euery soune
Nys but of eyre reuerberacyoune

And

And euer it wasteth lytle and lytle away
There is no man can demen, by my fay
yf that it were departed equally
what to my chorle: to, yet how chrendly
Vnto my confessour to day he spake
I holde hym certayne a demoniake.
Now eteth your meat, & let ỳ chorle go play
Let hym go hongen hym selfe a deuel way.
Now stode the lordes squyer at the borde
That carfe his meate, & herd word by worde
Of al thynge of whych I haue you sayde
Hy lorde (q he) be not euel apayde
I couth tel for a gowne cloth
To you syr frere, so that ye ben not wroth
Howe that thys carte shulde euen ydeled be
Amonges your conent, yf it lyketh the.
Tel on (q ỳ lorde) & thou shalt haue anon
A gowne clothe, by god and by sayne Jhon
Hy lorde (q he) when ỳ the weder is fayre
Without en wynde, or perturbynge of ayre
Let bringe a carte whele here into thys hall
But loke he haue hys spokes all
Twelue spokes hath a carte whele cõmenly
And bringe me thē xii freres, wote ye why
For twelue is a conent as I gesse
Your confessour here, for hys worthynesse
Shal perfourme vp the nombre of his conēt
Thē shulle they knelen adowne by one assēt
And to euery spokes ende, in thys manere
Ful sadly lay hys nose shal a frere
Your noble confessour there, god him saue
Shal holde hys nose vpryght vnder ỳ naue
Then shal this chorle, wt holy stryfe & tought
As any tabour, hyther ben ybrought
And set him on the whele right of this carte
Upon the naue, & make hym let a farte
And ye shullen se, vp peryl of my lyfe
By preue, whych is demonstratyfe
That equally the sowne of it wyl wende
And eke the stynke, vnto the spokes ende
Saue ỳ thys worthy man your confessour
(Because he is a man of great honour)
Shal haue the fyrst frutes, as reson is
The noble vsage of freres yet is thys.
The worthest mā of hem shal fyrst be serued
And certaynly, he hath it wel deserued
He hath to day taught vs so moch good
With preechynge in the pulpet there he stood
That I may vouchsafe, I saye for me
He had the fyrst smel of fartes thre
And so wolde al hys brethren hardely
He beareth hym so fayre and holyly.

¶ The lord, ỳ lady, & eche man, saue ỳ frere
Sayd that Frankyn spake in thys matere
As wel as Ouyde dyd or Ptholome
Touchynge the chorles sayd subtylte
And hye wytte made hym speke as he spake
He nys no foole, ne no demoniake
And Frankyn hath ywonne a newe gowne
Hy tale is done, we ben almoste at towne.

Here endeth the Sompners tale, and here folowyth the clerke of Orenfordes prologue.

Syr clerke of Orforde, our hoost sayde
ye ryde as stil and coye, as doth a mayde
were newe spoused, syttynge at the borde
This day ne herd I of your mouth a worde
I trowe that ye studye about some sophyme
But Salomon sayeth, al thynge hath tyme
For goddes sake, bethe of better chere
It is no tyme now to studye here
Tel vs some mery tale by your faye
For what man is entred into a playe
He nedes mote vnto that playe assent
But preacheth not, as freres done in lent
To make vs for our olde synnes to wepe
Ne that thy tale make vs not to slepe
Tel vs some mery thynge of auentures
Your termes, your fygures, & your colourēs
Kepe hem in store, tyl so be that ye endyte
Hyghe style, as when men to kynges wryte
Speketh so playne at thys tyme, I you pray
That we may vnderstande what ye say.
¶ Thys worthy clerke benygnly answerde
Holde (q he) I am vnder your yerde
Ye haue of vs as nowe the gouernaunce
And therfore wol I do you obeysaunce
As farre as reason asketh hardely
I wol you tel a tale, whych that I
Lerned at Padowe, of a worthy clerke
As preued is by hys wordes and hys werke
He is now deed, and nayled in hys cheste
I praye to God sende hys soule good reste.
Fraunces Petrarke, the laureat poete
Hyght thys clerke, whose rhetorike swete
Enlumined al Italye of poetrye
As Lynan dyd of Philosophye

Or

Of lawe, as other arte particulere
But deathe wol not suffre hys dwellen here
But as it were the twynklynge of an eye
Hem bothe hath slayne, and al we shal dye.
But for to tellen of this worthy man
That taught me this tale, as I fyrst began
I say that he fyrst with hys style endyteth
(Or he the body of hys tale writeth)
A proheme, in whiche discriueth he
Piemount, and of Saluce the countre
And speketh of Apenniny the hylles hye
That ben the boundes of west Lumbardye
And of mount Vesulus in special

where as the Poo, out of a wel smal
Taketh hys fyrst spring and hys cours
That estwarde euer increseth in his cours
To Emelie warde, to Ferare, and to Venyse
The whiche a longe tyme were to deuyse
And truly, as to my iugement
Me thynketh it a thyng impartinent
Saue that hym lyste conuey hys matere
But this is his tale as ye shullen here.

Here endeth the prologue of the clerke of Orenforde, and here folowe-th hys tale.



Here is, in the west syde of Italye
Down at the rote of Vesulus the colde
A lusty playne, habundaunt of vitayle
Wher many a towne & tour thou maist behold
That founded were, in tyme of fathers olde
And many a nother delectable syghe
And Saluces, this noble countre highe

A Marches whylom was in that londe
As were his worthy elders hym byfore
And obeysaunt aye redy to hys honde
Were al hys lieges, bothe lesse and more
Thus in delyte he lyued, and hath done yore
Beloued & dred, through fauour of fortune

Both of his lordes and of hys commune

Therwith he was, as to speke of lynage
The gentyleste yborne of al Lombardy
A fayre person, & stronge, and yong of age
And ful of honour and curtesye
Discrete ynowe, his countre for to gye
Saue in some thynges he was to blame
And walter was this yonge lordes name

I blame him thus, that he consydred nought
In tyme comyng, what hym might betyde
But on his lust present was al his thought
And for to hauke and hunt on euery syde
Weny al other cures lette he slyde
And eke he ne wolde, that was worst of al
Wedde no wife, for ought that myght befal

Ouer

Onely that poynt hys people bare so fore
That flockmele on a day to hym they went
And out of hem, that wisest was of lore
(Or els that the lorde wolde best assent
That he shulde tel him what his people mēt
Or els coude he shewe suche matere)
He to the Marke sayd, as ye shullen here.

O noble Marques, your humanyte
Assureth vs, and yeueth vs hardynesse
As ofte tyme as it nedeth me
That we may to you tel our heuynesse
Accepteth lorde of your gentylnesse
That we to you with pitous hert playne
And lette your eares nat my voice disdayne

Al haue I nat to done in this matere
More than another hath in this place
Yet for as moche as ye my lorde so dere
Haue alway shewed me fauour and grace
I dare the better aske of you a space
Of audience, to shewen our requeste
And ye my lorde to done right as you leste

For certes lorde: so wel vs lyketh you
And al your werkes, & euer haue don, ỳ we
Se coulde our owne selfe deuysen how we
We myght more lyuen in felycite
Saue one thyng lorde, ỳf it your wyl be
That for to be a wedded man, you lest
Thā were your people in soueryn hertes

Boweth your necke vnder the blissful yoke
Of soueraynte, and not of seruyse
Whiche men clepen spousayle or wedlocke
And thenketh lord, amōg your thoughtes wise
Howe that our dayes passen in sundrie wyse
For though we slepe or wake, rome, or ryde
Ay fleeth the tyme, it wol no man abyde

And though your grene youthe floure, as yet
In creepeth age alway as stil as stone
And deth manaseth euery age, and smyte
In eche estate, for there escapeth none
And also certayn, as we knowen echone
That we shul dye, & vncertayne we al
Ben of that day, that dethe shal on vs fal

Accepteth than of vs the trewe entent
That neuer yet refused your heste
And we wol al lorde, ỳf ye wol assent
Chese you a wyfe in shorte tyme, at the leste
Borne of the gentilleste and of the meste
Of al this londe, so that it aughte seme
Honour to god & you, as nere as we cā deme

Deliuer vs out of al this busy drede
And take a wyfe, for hye goddes sake
For ỳf it so befel, as god forbede
That thorowe dethe, your linage shuld slake
And that a straunge successour shulde take
Your heritage, O, wo were vs on lyue
Wherfore we pray you hastely to wyue.

Her meke prayere and her pytouse chere
Made the Marke for to haue pyte
Wel ye (q he) myne owne people dere
To that I neuer erst thought, constrayne me
I me enioyced of my lyberte
That selden tyme is founde in mariage
There I was free, I mote ben in seruage

But natheles, I se your true entente
And trust vpon your wytte, & haue done ayr
Wherfore of my fre wyl I wol assente
To wedden me, as sone as euer I may
But there as ye haue profred me to day
To chese me a wyfe, I you relese
That choyce, and pray you of that profer cese

For god it wote, that children ofte been
Vnlyke her worthy elders hem before
Bounte cometh al of god, & nat of the streen
Of whiche they ben engendred and ibore
I trust in goddes bounte, and therfore
My mariage, myne estate, and rest
I hym be take, he may don as hym lest

Lette me alone in chesynge of my wyfe
That charge vpon my backe I wol endure
But I you pray, and charge vpon your lyfe
That what wyfe I take, ye me ensure
To worshipe her, whiles her lyfe may dure
In worde and werke, here, and els where
As she an Emperours doughter were

And furthermore, thus shal ye swere, ỳ ye
Ayenst my choyce shal neuer grutch ne stryue
For ỳf the I shal forgo my lyberte
At your requeste, as euer mote I thryue
There as myn hert is set, there wol I wyue
And but ye wol assent, in suche manere
I pray you speketh no more in this matere

With herty wyl they sworen and assent
To al this thyng, there sayd no wight nay
Besechyng hym of grace er they went
That he wolde hem graunt a certayn day
Of his spousaile, as soone as euer he may
For yet alway the people somwhat dredde
Lest this Markes wolde no wyfe wedde

He graunted hem a day, suche as him lest
On whiche he wolde be wedded secretly
And sayd he dyd al this at her request
And they with humble entent ful buxomly
Knelyng vpon her knees ful reuerently
Hym thonked al, and thus they han an ende
Of her entent, and home ayen they wende

And here vpon he tok his officers
Commaundyng for the feest to purvay
And to his priuy knyghtes and squyers
Suche charge yaue, as he lyst on hem lay
And they to his cõmaundement obey
And eche of hem doth hys dilygence
To done to the feest reuerence.

Explicit pars prima: et incipit pars secunda.

Nought ferre fro thylke place honorable
Where as this Markes shope hys marriage
There stode a thrope, of syght ful delectable
In whiche poore folke of that village
Hadden her bestes and herbygage
And of her labour tok her sustenaunce
After that the erthe yaue hem habundaunce

Amõge this poore folke, ther dwelled a mã
Which that was holden poorest of hem all
But hye god somtyme sende can
His grace vnto a lytel ore stall
Janycola, men of that thrope hym cal
A doughter had he, fayre ynoughe to syght
And Grisylde this yonge mayden hyght

But for to speke of vertuous beaute
Than was she one the fayrest vnder sonne
And ful poorely yfostred was she
No lykerous lust was in her herte ironne
Wel ofter of the wel than of the tonne
She dronke, and for she wolde vertue plese
She knewe wel labour, but not ydel ese

But though this mayde were tender of age
Yet in the brest of her virginite
There was enclosed, sadde and ripe corage
And in great reuerence and charyte
Her olde poore father fostred she
A fewe shepe spynnyng on the felde she kept
She wolde not ben idel tyl she slept

And whã she homward came, she wold bring
Wortes and herbes, tymes ful ofte
Which she shradde & sethe for her liuyng
And made her bedde ful hard, & nothing softe
And aye she kept her fathers lyfe on lofte
With euery obeysaunce and dilygence
That child might do to the fathers reuerence

Upon Grisylde the poore creature
Wel ofte hath the Markes sette his eye
As he an huntyng rode paraventure
And whan it fel that he myght her aspye
He not with wanton lokyng of folye
His eyen caste vpon her, but in sadde wyse
Upon her chere, he wolde hym ofte auyse

Commending in his herte her womãhode
And eke her vertue, passyng euery wyght
Of so yonge age, as wel in chere as in dede
For though the people haue no great insyght
In vertue: he conseyued ful ryght
Her bounte, and disposed that he wolde
Her wedde, yf he euer wedde shulde.

The day of weddyng com, but no wight can
Tel, what woman it shulde be
For whiche marueile, wondred many a man
And sayden, whan they were in her priuete
Wol not our lorde yet leaue his vanyte
Wol he not wedde, alas alas the whyle
Why wol he thus hym selfe and vs begyle

But natheles this Markes hath do make
Of gemmes, set in golde and in asure
Broches and rynges, for Grisyldes sake
And of her clothyng tok he the mesure
Of a mayden lyke to her stature
And eke of other ornamentes al
That to suche a weddyng shulde fal

The tyme of vndren, in the same day
Approched, that the weddyng shulde be

And

And al the paleys put was in array
Bothe halle and chambre, eche in his degre
Houses of offyces stuffed with great plente
There mayste thou se of daynteous vitayle
That may be founde, as fer as lasteth Itayle

This royal Marke, rychely arayde
Lordes and ladyes in his companye
The which that to the feest were prayde
And of his retinue the bachelery
with many a sowne of sondrie melodye
Unto the village, of which I tolde
In this aray, the right way hath holde.

¶ Griselde (god wotte of this ful innocent
That for her was shape al this array)
To fetche water at a wel went
And cometh home as sone as euer she may
For wel she herde say, that ylke day
That ꝑ Marke shuld wedde, & if she might
She wolde fayne seen some of that syght
(stode
She thought: I wold vn other maydens
That ben my felowes in our doze and se
The Markes, and therto wol I fonde
To done at home, as sone as it may be
The labour, which that longeth to me
And than may I at leyser it beholde
If she the way to the castel holde

And as she wolde ouer the thresholde gon
The Marke came, and gan her for to call
And she sette dowe her water potte anon
Besyde the thresholde of the ore stal
And doune vpon her knees she gan to fal
And with sadde countenaunce knelyd styl
Til she had herde what was the lordes wyl

This thoughtful Marke spake to ꝑ mayd
wel soberly, and sayd in this manere
where is your father Grisylde, he sayde
And she with reuerence and mekе chere
Answerde, lorde he is al redy here
And in she gothe, without lenger lette
And to the Marke she her father fette

He by the honde than toke this olde man
And sayd thus, whan he had hym asyde
Janycola, I neyther may ne can
Lenger the pleasaunce of myne herte hyde
If that thou vouchsafe, what so euer betyde
Thy doughter wol I take, or that I wende
As for my wyfe, to my lyues ende

Thou louest me, I wotte wel certayne
And arte my faythful liege man yboze
And al that lyketh me, I dare wel sayne
It lyketh the, and specially therfore
Tel me that poynte, that I haue said before
If that thou wolt to this purpose drawe
To take me for thy sonne in lawe

¶ This sodayne case, the man astoned so
That reed he wert abashed, & al quakyng
he stode, ne vnneth sayd he wordes mo
But onely thus (ꝙ he) lorde my wyllyng
Is as ye wol, ne ayenst your lykyng
I wol nothyng, ye be my lorde so dere
Right as you lyste, gouerne this matere

Than wol I thus (ꝙ this Marke) sothly
That in thy chambre, I, you, and she
Haue a collation, and wost thou why
For I wol aske her, yf her wyl be
To be my wyfe, and rule her after me
And al this shal she done in thy presence
I wol not speke out of thyn audyence

And in the chambre, while they were about
The tretes, whiche ye shal after here
The people came into the house without
And wondred hem, in how honest manere
Ho tentifly she kept her father dere
But vtterly Grisylde wonder myght
For neuer erste sawe she suche a syght

No wonder is though she be astoned
To se so great a gest come into that place
She was neuer to suche gestes woned
For which she loked with ful pale face
But shortly fro this mater for to pace
These weren the wordes ꝑ the Marke sayd
To this benygne and bery faythful mayde

¶ Grisylde he said, ye shal wel vnderstonde
It lyketh vnto your father and me
That I you wedde, and eke it may so stonde
As I suppose, that ye wol that it so be
But these demaundes I aske fyrst (ꝙ he)
That sythen it shal be done in hasty wyse
wol ye therto assent, or els you auyse

I say thus, be ye redy with good herte
To al my lust, and that I freely may

As me best liketh, though ye laugh or smerte
And neuer ye to grutche, nyght ne day
whan I say ye, that ye say not ones nay
Neyther in word, ne by frowning countenãce
Swere this, & here I swere our alliaunce

Wondryng vpõ these wordes, quakyng for
She said: lorde, indigne & vnworthy (drede
Am I, to thylke honour that ye me bede
But right as ye wol, so wol I
And here I swere, that neuer wyllyngly
In word, werke, ne thought, I nil you disobey
For to be dede, though me were loth to dey.

This is ynough Grisylde myne (q he)
And forthe he gothe with a sobre chere
Out at the dore, and after came she
And to the people, he said in this manere
This is my wyfe (q he) that stondeth here
Honoureth her, & loueth her, I you pray
who so me loueth, there nys no more to say

And for that no thyng of her olde gere
She shulde bring in to his house, he badde
That women shulde dispoyle her right there
Of which these ladyes were nothing gladde
To hadle her clothes, in which she was clad
But natheless, this mayden bright of hewe
Fro foote to heed they clothed han al newe

Her heer han they kembed, pe laye vntrelled
Ful rudely, and with her fyngres smale
A crowne on her heed they han idressed
And set it ful of ouches great and smale
Of her array, what shulde I make a tale
Vnneth the people her knew for her fairnesse
whan she transformed was in such richesse

This Walter hath her spoused vb a ringe
Brought for the same cause, & than her set
Vpon an horse snowe white, wel amblynge
And to his paleys, or he lenger let
with ioyful people, that her ladde and met
Conueyed her, & thus the day they spende
In reuel, tyl the sonne gan descende

And shortly forthe this tale for to chace
I saye, that to this newe Walwesse
God hath sent such fauour of hys grace
That it semed not, as by her lyuelynesse
That she was borne and fedde in rudenesse
As in a cote, or in an other stal
But nothed in an emperoures hal

To euery wight, the more is he dere
And worthy ful, pe folke ther as she was bore
And fro her byrthe, knewe her yere by yere
Vnneth trowed they, but durst haue swore
That to Janycola, of wynche I spake before
She doughter nas, for as by coniecture
Hem thought she was a nother creature

For though that euer vertuous was she
She was encreased in such excellence
Of thewes good, set in hye bounte
And so discrete, and fayre of eloquence
So benygne, and digne of reuerence
And coulde the peoples hertes so embrace
That eche her loued that loked in her face

Not onely of Saluce in the toun
Publysshed was the bountie of her name
But eke beside, in many a regioun
If one sayd wel, an other sayd the same
So spradde of her bountie the fame
That men & women, both yonge and olde
Gone to Saluces her to beholde.

This walter lowly, and ful royally
Wedded hath with fortunate honestie
In goddes peace: lyueth ful easely
At whom, & outwarde grace ynough had he
And for he sawe that vnder lowe degre
was honest vertue hyd, the people him held
A prudent man, and that is seene wel selde.

Not only this Grisylde, through her wyt
Couthe al the feate of wyfely humblesse
But eke, whan the case required it
The comen profyte couthe she redresse
There nas discorde, rancour, ne heuynesse
In al the londe, that she ne couthe apese
And bring hem al wysely in rest and ese

Though her husbond absent were or none
If gentylmen, or other of her countre
were wrothe, she wolde bring hem at one
So wyse and rype wordes had she
And iugement of so great equite
That she fro heuen sent was, as men wende
People to saue, & euery wronge to amende.

Not longe tyme after this Grisylde
Was wedded, she a doughter had ybore

Al had

Had she lener haue borne a man chylde
Glad was ꝑ Warkes and his folke therfore
For though a mayde chylde came al before
She may to a man chylde attayne
By lykelyhode, sythens she is not barayne.

Explicit pars secunda:
et incipit pars
tertia.

Here fel, as it befalleth oft tymes mo
Whā that this childe had sucked but a throwe
This Warkes in his herte lōged so
To tempte hys wyfe, her sadnesse to knowe
That he ne myght out of hys herte throwe
This marueylous desyre, hys wyfe to assaye
Nedelesse god wot, he thought her to affraye

He had assayed her ynoughe before
And fonde her euer good, what nedeth it
Her for to tempte & alway more and more
Though some man praise it for a subtyl wyt
But as for me, I say ful yuel it syt
To assay a wyfe, whan that it is no nede
And put her in angwysshe and in drede

For which this Warkes wrought in this manere
He came alone a nyght there as she lay
With sterne face, and right vgly chere
And sayd thus: Grisylde (q he) that day
That I the toke out of thy poore aray
And put the in estate of hye noblesse
Thou hast not that forgoten, as I gesse

I say Grisylde, the present dignyte
In whiche I haue put the, as I trowe
Maketh not the forwetful for to be
That I the toke in poore astate ful lowe
For any wele, thou must thy selfe knowe
Take hede of euery worde what I sey
There is no wight that hereth but we twey

Thou wotest thy self, how ꝑ thou came here
In to this house, it is not longe ago
And though to me thou be both lefe and dere
Vnto my gentyls thou art nothyng so
They say, to hem it is great shame and wo
For to ben subiette and ben in seruage
To the, that borne arte in so smal a village

And namely syth thy doughter was yborne
These wordes haue they spoken douteles
But I desyre, as I haue done byfore
To lyue my lyfe with hem, in rest and pees
I may not in this case be recheles
I mote done with thy doughter, for the best
Not as I wolde, but as my gentyls lest

And yet god wote, this is ful lothe to me
But natheles without thy wetyng
I wol naught do, but thus I wol (q he)
That thou to me assent, as in thys thyng
Shewe nowe thy patience, in thy werkyng
That thou me hight & swore in our village
That day that maked was our mariage

Whā she had herde al this, she not ameued
Neyther in word, in chere, ne in countenaunce
For as it semed, she was not agreued
She sayd lorde, al lyeth in your pleasaunce
My childe and I, with hertely obeysaunce
Ben yours al, and ye may saue or spyl
With your owne, worketh your owne wyll

There may nothyng, so god my soule saue
Lyking to you, that may displese me
Ne I desyre nothyng for to haue
Ne drede for to lese, saue onely ye
This wil is in my herte, and aye shal be
No length of tyme, or deth it may deface
Neyther chāge my corage into another place

Glad was the Warkes of her answering
But yet he layned as he were not so
Al drery was his chere, and his lokyng
Whan that he shulde out of the chambre go
Soone after hys, a forlonge way or two
He priuely had tolde al his entent
Vnto a man, and to his wyfe hym sent

In maner of a sergēt was this priuy mā
The which he faythful ofte founde had
In thynges great, & eke suche folke wel can
Done execucyon of thynges badde
The lorde knewe wel, he him loued & dradde
And whan this sergeant wyst his lordes wil
In to the chambre he stalked hym ful styl

Madame he sayd, ye moten forgeue it me

Though I do thing, which I am cõstrayned
Ye be ful wyse, and ful wel knowe ye
That lordes hestes may not be fayned
They may wel bewayled and complayned
But men muste nedes vnto her lyste obey
And so wol I, there nis no more to sey

This childe I am cõmaunded to take
And spake no more, but vp the chylde he hent
Wyl̄itoully, and gan a chere to make
As though he wolde haue slayne it or he wēt
Grisylde must al suffre, and consent
And as a lambe, she sytteth meke and styl
And let this cruel sergeaunt do his wyl

¶ Suspecte was the fame of this man
Suspecte his face, suspecte hys worde also
Suspecte the tyme in whiche he this began
Alas her doughter, that she loued so
For he wende he wold haue slayne it right tho
But natheleſſe, she neyther wepte ne syked
Conformyng her to that the Marques lyked

But at the laſte to spekē she began
And meekely she the sergeaunt prayde
(So as he was a worthy gentilman)
That she might kysse her chylde er þ it deyde
And in her barme, this lytel chylde she leyde
With ful sadde face, and gan the chylde bylle
And lulled it, and after gan it kyſſe

And thus she sayd in her benygne voyce
Farwel my chylde, I shal the neuer se
But sythen I haue marked þ with the croyce
Of thylke father yblessed mote thou be
That for vs dyed vpon the rode tree
Thy soule lytel chylde, I him betake
For this nyght shalte thou dyen for my sake

¶ I trowe that to a norice in thys caas
It had ben harde, this routhe for to se
Wel might a mother than crye alas
But natheleſſe, so sadde and stedfast was she
That she endured al her aduersyte
And to the sergeaunt meekely she sayde
Haue here ayen your lytel ponge mayde

And goth now (q̄ she) and doth my lordes hest
And o thing wolde I pray you of your grace
But yf my lorde forbyd it you at the leſte
Burye this lytel body in some place
That no bestes ne byrdes it do race
But he no worde to that purpose wolde sey
But tooke the childe, and went anon his way.

This sergeaunt came to the lorde agayne
And of Grisyldes wordes, and of her chere
He tolde him worde by worde, shorte & playne
And him presented with his doughter dere
Somwhat this lord had routh in his manere
But natheleſſe, his purpose helde he styl
As lordes done, whā they wol haue her wyl

And badde the sergeaunt that ful preuely
He shuld this child wel kepe wynd & wrappe
With al the circumstaunce tenderly
And carry it in a cofre, or in a lappe
But on payne of hys heed al to kwappe
That no man shulde knowe of his entente
Ne whence he came, ne whyther he went

But at Boleyne, to his suster dere
That thilke tyme of Panye was countesse
He shulde it take, and shewe her this matere
Beſechyng her to done her busynesse
This childe to fostre in al gentylnesse
And whose chylde þ it was, he bade her hyde
From euery wight, for ought þ myght betyde

This sergeaunt gothe, and hathe fulfylled
thys thyng
But to thys Marques nowe retourne we
For nowe gothe he ful ofte ymaginyng
If by his wyues chere, he myght se
Or by her wordes, perceyue that she
were chaunged, but he neuer couldē fynde
But euer in one ylyke sadde and kynde

As glad, as humble, as busy in seruyse
And eke in loue, as she was wont to be
Was she to hym, in euery maner wyse
Ne of her doughter one worde spake she
None accident, for none aduersyte
was sene in her, ne neuer her doghters name
Nempned she, for ernest ne for game.

¶ Explicit tertia pars: et incipit pars quarta.

IN thys estate, passed ben foure yere
Er she wyth chylde was, but as god wolde
A man chylde she bare by this waltere

wel

wel gracious, and fayre to beholde
And when tolde it to the father tolde
Not onely he, but al the countre merye
was for the chyld, & god they thonke & herye

when it was two yere olde, & from the breſt
Departed from hys norryce on a daye
Thys Markes caught yet another ieſt
To tempten hys wyfe eſſe ſones, yf he maye
Onebeſſe was ſhe tepred, I dare wel ſaye
But wedded men ne conne no meſure
when they fynde a patient creature

wyfe (q̄ this Markes) ye haue herd of this
My people heuely bareth our mariage
And namely ſythen my ſonne borne is
Now is it worſe then euer in our age
The murmure ſleeth my herte & my corage
For to myne eeres co:meth ꝑ voyce ſo ſmerte
That it wel nye deſtroyed hath my herte.

Now ſay they thus, whē walter is agone
Then ſhal the bloode of Januila ſuccede
And ben our lorde, for other haue we none
Suche wordes ſay my people, it is no drede
wel ought I of ſuche murmure take hede
For certaynly I drede ſuche ſentence
Though they not playnly ſpeke i my audience

I wolde lyue in peace, yf that I myght
wherfore I am diſpoſed vtterly
As I hys ſyſter ſerued by nyght
Right ſo I thynke to ſerue hym priuely
Thus warne I you, that ye not ſodeynly
Out of your ſelfe for no wo ſhulde outraye
Bere patient, and therof I you praye.

I haue (q̄ ſhe) ſayd, and euer ſhal
I wol ne nyl nothynge certayne
But as you lyſt: Nought greueth me at al
Though ꝑ my doughter & my ſōne be ſlayne
At your comaundement: thys is to ſayne
I haue had no parte of chyldren twayne
But fyrſt ſyckneſſe, & after wo and payne.

Ye ben our lord, doth vē your owne thyng
Right as you lyſte, and taketh no rede of me
For as I lefte at home my clothyng
when I came fyrſt to you, right ſo (q̄ ſhe)
I lefte I my wyll, and al my lyberte
And toke your clothing: wherfor I you praye
Do your wyl, I wol to it obeye

And certes, yf I had preſcience
Your wyl to knowe, er ye your luſt me tolde
I wolde it done, wythout negligence
But now I wote your luſt, & what ye wolde
Al your pleſaunce, fyrme & ſtable I holde
For wyſte I ꝑ my death wolde done you eſe
Gladly wolde I ſuffre it you to pleaſe.

Death may make no compariſoun
Vnto your loue: And whē thys Markes ſay
The conſtaunce of hys wyfe, he caſt adoun
Hys eyen two: and wondred how ſhe may
In ſuche patience, ſuffreth al thys aray
And forth he goeth, with drery countenaunce
But to hys herte, it was ful great pleaſaunce.

Thys eygre ſergeant, in the ſame wyſe
That he her doughter caught, ryght ſo he
Or worſe, yf he couilde werſe deuyſe
Hath hente her ſonne, ꝑ was ful of beaute
And euer in one ſo patient was ſhe
That ſhe no chere made of heuyneſſe
But kyſſeth her chylde, & after gan him bleſſe

Saue thys ſhe prayd him, yf that he might
Her lytel ſonne he wolde in erth graue
Hys tendre lymmes, delycate to ſyght
Fro foules and fro beaſtes to ſaue
But ſhe none anſwere of hym myght haue
He went hys waye as he nothynge rought
But to Boleyne he tenderly it brought.

This Markes wōdred euer lēger ꝑ more
Vpon her patience, and yf that he
Ne had ſothely knowen there before
That parfytly her chyldren loued ſhe
He wolde haue wende, ꝑ for ſome ſubtelte
And of malyce, or cruel corage
That ſhe had ſuffred thys vē ſadde vſage.

But he knewe wel, ꝑ nere hym ſelfe certayne
She loued her chyldren beſt, in euery wyſe
But now of women wolde I aſke fayne
yf theſe aſſayes mayght not ſuffyſe
what couilde a ſturdy huſbonde more deuyſe
To preue her wyfehode, & her ſtedfaſtneſſe
But be contynuynge euer in ſturdyneſſe

But there be folke of ſuche condicion
That whē they han a certayne purpoſe take
They couth not ſtynte of her entencion
But as they were bounden to a ſtake

They wol not of that purpose flake
Ryght so thys Marches, hath fully purposed
To tepte hys wyfe, as he was fyrst disposed

He wayteth, yf by wordes or countenaunce
She were to hym chaunged of corage
But neuer coulde he fynde variaunce
She was aye in one herte and vysage
And euer the further that she was in age
The more truer (yf it were possible)
She was to hym in loue, and more penyble.

For whych it semeth thus, that of hem two
There nas but one wyl: for as walter lest
The same lust was her pleasaunce also
And god be thanked, al fel for the beste
She shewed wel, for no worldly vnreste
A wyfe, as for her selfe, nothynge sholde
Wyllen in effecte, but as her husbonde wolde

The sclaūder of walter, wōder wyde spradd
That of cruel herte, ful wretchedly
(For he a poore woman wedded had)
Hath murdred both hys chyldren prively
Which murmure was amonge hem comenly
No wonder was: for to the peoples ere
Ther cāe no word, but ỳ they murdred were

For whych, there as hys people ther before
had loued him wel, disclaudred of his defame
Hade hem, that they hated hym therfore
To ben a murtherer is an hateful name
But natheleſſe, for erneſt ne for game
He of hys cruel purpose wolde not stent
To tempt hys wyfe, was al hys entent.

when ỳ hys doughter. xij. yere was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtel wyse
(Enfourmed of hys wyl) sent hys message
Cōmaundyng hem, suche bylles to deuyse
As to hys cruel purpose may suffyse
Howe that the pope, for hys peoples rest
Bade hym wedde another, yf that hym leste.

I saye he bade, they shulde counterfete
The popes bulle, makynge mencion
That he hath leue, hys fyrst wyfe to lete
As by the popes dyspensacion
To stynte rancoure and dyssencion
Betwyxt hys people & him, thus spake ỳ bul
The whych they han publyshed at the full
The rude people, as no wonder nys
wenden ful wel it had ben ryght so
But when these tydynges come to Grisyldis
I deme, that her herte was ful wo
But she was lyche sadde euermo
Disposed was thys humble creature
The aduersite of fortune to endure

Abydynge euer hys lust & hys pleasaūce
To whome she was yeuen, herte and all
As to her worldly sufficyaunce
But certaynly, yf I thys storie tel shal
Thys Marches ywritten hath in special
A letter, in whych he shewed hys entent
And priuely, he it to Bologne sent

To the erle of Pauy, whych that had tho
wedded hys syster: he prayde specially
To bryngen him ayen hys chyldren two
In honorable estate al openly
But one thynge he hym prayde al utterly
that he to no wight, though me̅ would enquire
Shulde tellen whose chyldren they were.

But say ỳ the mayden shulde wedded be
Unto the Marches of Saluce anone
And as the erle was prayde, so dyd he
For at a daye yfette, he on hys way is gone
Towarde Saluce, and lordes many one
In ryche aray, thys mayden for to gyde
Her yonge brother rydynge by her syde.

Arayed was towarde her mariage
Thys mayden freshe, ful of gemmes clere
And her brother, that seuen yere was of age
Arayed was eke freshely in hys manere
And thus in great noblesse and glad chere
Towarde Saluce, shapen her journay
Fro day to day, rydynge forth her way.

Explicit quarta pars:
Et sequitur pars quinta.

Amonge al thys, after hys wycked vsage
Thys Marches hys wyfe yet to tempte more
To the vttereſt proef of her corage
Fully to haue experience and lore
yf that she were as stedfast (as before)
He on a daye in open audience
Ful boystously hath sayd her thys sentence.

Certes

Certes Grisylde, I had ynough of pleasaunce
To han you to my wyfe, for your goodnesse
And for your trouth, and your obeysaunce
Not for your lynage, ne for your richesse
But I nowe knowe in very sothfastnesse
That in great lordshyp, yf I me wel aduyse
There is great servitude in sondry wyse

I may not done, as euery ploughmá maye
My people me constrayneth for to take
Another wyfe, and cryen daye by daye
And eke the pope, rhys rancoure for to slake
Consenteth it, that dare I vndertake
And truely, thus moche I wol you saye
My newe wyfe is comynge by the waye.

Be stróge of herte, & voyde anone her place
And thylke dowry that ye brought to me
Take it aven, I graunt it of my grace
Retourneth to your fathers house (q he)
No man may alwaye haue prosperite
With euen herte, I rede you to endure
The stroke of fortune, or of auenture.

And she aven answerde in pacience:
My lorde (q she) I wote and wyst alwaye
Howe that betwyxte your magnificence
And my pouert, no man can ne maye
Maken no comparison, it is no naye
I helde me neuer dygne in no manere
To ben your wyfe, ne yet your chamberere

And in thys house, there ye me lady made
(The hye god take I, as for my wytnesse
And also wysely, as he my soule glade)
I helde me neyther lady ne maystresse
But humble seruaunt to your worthynesse
And euer shal, whyle my lyfe may endure
Aboven euery worldly creature.

That ye so longe of your benignite
Haue holde me in honour and nobley
(where I was not worthy for to be)
That thanke I god & you, to whom I prey
So yelde it you, there is no more to sey
Unto my father gladly wolde I wende
And wyth hym dwel to my lyues ende.

There I was fostred of a chylde ful smale
Tyl I be deed, my lyfe there wol I lede
A wydowe clene in herte, body and al
For sythen I yaue to you my maydenhede
And am your trewe wyfe, it is no drede
God shylde suche a lordes wyfe to take
Another man, to husbonde or to make.

And of your newe wyfe, god of hys grace
So graunt you weith and hygh prosperite
For I wol gladly yeue her my place
In whych I was blysful wonte to be
For sythen it lyketh you my lorde (q she)
(That whylom weren al my hertes reste)
That I shal gone: I shal go when you leste.

But there as ye me profred such dowayre
As I fyrst brought, it is wel in my mynde
It were my wretched clothes, nothing fayre
The which to me now wer ful hard to fynde
Oh, good god: howe gentel & how kynde
Ye semed by your speche and your vysage
The daye that maked was our mariage.

But soth is sayd, algate I fynde it trewe
For in effecte it is proued nowe on me
Loue is not olde, as when it is newe
For certes lorde, for none aduersite
To dyen in thys case, it shal neuer be
That euer in worde or worke I shal repent
That I you yaue myne herte in good entent

My lorde ye wote, that in my fathers place
Ye dyd me strype out of my poore wede
And rychely ye cladde me of your grace
To you brought I nought els out of drede
But fayth, nakednesse, and maydenhede
But here ayen your clothynge I restore
And eke my weddynge ryng for euermore

The remenaunt of your iewels redy be
Within your chambre, dare I safely sayne
Naked out of my fathers house (q she)
I came: and naked I mote turne agayne
Al your pleasaunce wolde I folowe fayne
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smockelesse out of your paleys went

Ye coulde not do so dyshonest a thynge
That ylke wombe, in whych your chyldré lay
Shulde before the people, in my walkinge
Be sene al bare: wherfore I you pray
Let me not lyke a worme go by the way
Remembreth you myne owne lorde so dere
I was your wife, though I vnworthy were

wherfore

Wherfore in reward of my maydenhede
Which I to you brought, & not ayen bere
As vouchesafe to yeue me to my mede
But suche a smocke as I was wonte to were
That I therwith may wype ꝑ wombe of here
That was your wyfe: & here I take my leue
Of you, myne owene lorde, lest I you greue

¶ The smock (q he) ꝑ thou hast on thy bake
Let it be fayr, and bere it forthe with the
But wel vnneth that worde he spake
But went his way, for routhe and pyte
Before the folke her selfe stryppeth she
And in her smocke, with foote & heed al bare
Towarde her fathers house forth is she fare

The folke folowed wepyng in her wey
And fortune euer they cursed as they gone
But she fro wepyng kept her eyen drey
Ne in this tyme, worde spake she none
Her father, that this tydinges herde anone
Cursed the day and tyme that nature
Shope him to ben a lyues creature

For out of doute, this olde poore man
Was euer suspecte of her mariage
For euer he demed, sythen it began
That whan the lorde fulfilled had his corage
Hym wolde thynke it was a disparage
To his estate, so lowe for to alyght
And wedden her, as sone as euer he might.

¶ Ayenst his doughter hastely gothe he
(For he by ꝑ noyse of folk knew her coming)
And with her olde cote, as it might be
She couered her, ful sore wepyng
But on her body might he it not bring
For rude was the clothe, & she more of age
By dayes fele than was her mariage.

¶ Thus with her father, for a certayne space
Dwelleth this floure of wyfely patience
That neuer by her wordes, ne by her face
Before the folke, ne eke in absence
Ne shewed she, that her were done offence
Ne of her hye estate no remembraunce
Ne had she, as by her countenaunce

No wonder is, for in her great estate
Her goste was euer in playne humylite
No rygour, ne pryde, ne hate
No pompe, ne semblaunce of royalte
But ful of pacience and benygnyte
Discrete, and prudente, and ay honorable
And to her husbonde euer meke and stable

¶ Men speke of Job, & most of his humylite
As clerkes (whan hem lyste) can wel endyte
Namely of men: but in soothfastnesse
Though clerkes praise women but a lyte
There can no man in humblesse hem aquyte
As women can: ne be halfe so trewe
As women ben, but it befal of newe.

¶ Explicit quinta pars: et sequitur pars sexta.

Fro Bolayne is the erle of Pavy come
Of whiche the fame sprange to more and lesse
And to the peoples eeres, al and some
Was couthe eke, howe a newe Marquesse
He with him brought, in pompe & swiche richesse
That was neuer seene with mannes eye
So noble aray, in west Lumbardye.

¶ The Markes, that shope & knewe al this
Er ꝑ this erle was come, sent hys message
To thylke poore and sely Grisylidis
And she with humble herte, & glad vysage
Not with swellyng herte in her corage
Came at his heste, & on her knees her sette
And reuerently and wysely she hym grette.

¶ Grisylde (q he) my wyl is vtterly
This mayde, that wedded shal be vnto me
Receyued be to morowe al so royally
As it is possyble in my house to be
And eke that euery wyght in his degre
Haue his estate in seruyng and seruyse
And also pleasaunt, as ye can beste deuyse

I haue no woman sufficyent certayne
The chambres for to arraye in ordynaunce
After my lust: and therfore wolde I fayne
That thyne were al swiche gouernaunce
Thou knowest eke of olde al my pleasaunce
Though thyn aray be badde, & yuel besey
Do thou thy deuer at the leste wey.

¶ Not onely lorde that I am glad (q she)
To done your lust, but I desyre also
You for to please, and serue in my degre
Without feynyng, and shal euer mo

Ne neuer

Ne neuer for no wele, ne for no wo
Ne shal the goste wythin my herte stent
To loue you best, wyth all my true entent

And with ꝑ word, she gan ꝑ house to dyght
And tables to sette, and beddes to make
And payned her to done al that she myght
Prayenge the chamberers for goddes sake
To haste hem, and fast swepe and shake
And she the moste seruysable of hem al
Hath euery chambre arayed, and hys hal.

Thouten vndren gan thys erle alyght
That wt hi brought these noble childrē twey
For whych the people ranne to se that syght
Of her araye, so ryche ly besey
And then at erste amonges hem they sey
That walter was no foole, though hym lest
To chaunge hys wyfe: for it was for ꝑ best.

For she is fayrer, as they demen al
Then is Grisylde, and more tender of age
And fayrer fruite bytwene hem shal fal
And more pleasaunce, for her hye lynage
Her brother eke, so fayre was of hys age
That bi to sene ꝑ people had cause plesaūce
Comendyng now the Markes gouernaūce

O sterne people, vnsad and vntrewe
Ye vndiscrete, and chaungynge as a fane
Delytynge euer in rumer that is newe
For lyke the moone euer wane ye & wane
Euer ful of clappynge, dere ynough a lane
Your doome is falsse, your cōstāce euel preueth
A ful great foole is he that on you leueth

Thus sayden sad folke in that erte
when that the people gased vp and downe
For they were glad, ryght wyth the nouelte
To haue a newe lady of her toun
Nomore of thys make I nowe mencioun
But to Grisylde ayen wol I me dresse
And tellen her constaūce, and her busynesse

Wel busy was Grisylde on euery thyng
That to the feest was appertinent
Right nauȝt was she abashed of her clothing
Though they were rude, & somwhat to rent
But wyth glad chere, to the yate is went
wyth other folke, to greten the Marquesesse
And after doth she forth her busynesse

wyth ryght glad chere, ꝑ gestes she receiueth
And buromly, euerych in hys degre
That no man defaute there perceyueth
But euer they wondren, what she myght be
That in so poore araye was for to se
And coulde suche honour, and reuerence
And worthely they prayse her prudence

In al the meane whyle she ne stente
Thys mayden and eke her brother to cōmende
wyth al her herte, and benygne entente
So wel, that no man coude her prayse amende
But at the laste, when these lordes wende
To syten adowne to meate, he gan to cal
Grisylde, as she was busy in the hal.

Grisylde (q he) as it were in hys play
Howe lyketh the my wyfe, and her beaute
Ryght wel my lorde (q she) for in good fay
A fayrer sawe I neuer none then she
I praye to god so yeue you prosperite
And so hope I, that he wol to you sende
Plesaunce ynough, vnto your lyues ende.

But one thynge I beseech, and warne also
That ye prycke wyth no turmentynge
Thys tender mayden, as ye han do mo
For she is fostred in her norysshynge
More tenderly, in my supposynge
She coulde not adversite endure
As coulde a poore fostred creature.

And when thys walter sawe her patience
Her glad chere, and no malyce at al
And he so ofte hath done her offence
And she aye constante, & stable as a wal
Contynuyng euer her innocence ouer al
Thys sturdy Markes gan hys herte dresse
To rewe vpon her wyfely stedfastnesse

Thys is ynough, Grisylde myne (q he)
Be no more agaste, ne yuel apayde
I haue thy fayth, and thy benignite
As wel as euer woman was assayde
In great estate, or poorely arrayde
Nowe knowe I dere wyfe thy stedfastnesse
And her in armes toke, and gan to kesse

And she for wonder, toke therof no kepe
She herde not what thynge he to her sayde
She fared as she had sterte out of her slepe
Tyl she out of her maseduesse abrayde

Grisylde

Grisylde (q he) by god that for vs deyde
Thou arte my wyfe, and none other I haue
Ne neuer had, as god my soule saue.

Thys is thy doughter, which ꝑ hast supposed,
To ben my wyfe, and none other fayrhfully
And this thal be myn heyre, as I haue disposed
Thou bare hem in thy body truely (sed
At Boleyne haue I kepte hem sekerly
Take hem ayen, for now mayst thou not say
That ꝑ hast lorne any of thy chyldren tway

And folke, that other wyse han sayd of me
I warne hem wel, ꝑ I haue done thys dede
For no malyce, ne for no cruelte
But for to assaye in the thy womanhede
And not for to slee my chyldren, god forbede
But for to kepen hem prively and syl
Tyl I thy purpose knewe, and al thy wyl

whē she this herd, a swone dowen she falleth
For pytous ioye, and after her sownynge
She both her yonge chyldren to her calleth
And in her armes, pytously wepynge
Embraced hem both, tenderly kyssynge
Ful lyke a mother, wyth her salte teeres
She bathed both her vysage and her heeres

O whych a pytous thynge it was to se
Her sownynge, and her pytous voyce to here
Graut mercy lorde, god thanke it you (q she)
That ye haue saued me my chyldren dere
Nowe recke I neuer to be ded ryght here
Syth I stande in your loue, and in your grace
No force of deth, ne when my spirite pace

O tendre, O dere, O yonge chyldrē myne
Your wofal mother wende stedfastly
That cruel houdes, or some foule vermyne
Had eaten you, but god of hys mercy
And your benigne father, so tenderly
Hath done you kepe: and in that same stounde
Al sodainly she swapte downe to the grounde

And in her swounyng, so sadly holdeth she
Her chyldrē two, when she gan hem embrace
That wyth great sleyght and dyfficulte
The chyldrē frō her armes they gan to race
O many a tere, on many a pytous face
Downe ran, of hem that stoden there besyde
Vnneth aboute her myght no man abyde.

walter her gladdeth, and her sorowe slaketh
She ryseth vp al abashed from her traunce
And euery wyght her ioye and fest maketh
Tyl she hath caught ayen her countenaunce
walter her doth so faythfully plesaunce
That it was deynty to sene the chere
Betwyxt hem two, whē they were met yere

These ladyes, whan they her tyme sey
Han taken her, and into chambre gon
And strypen her out of her rude array
And in a cloth of golde, that bryght shone
wyth a crowne of many a ryche stone
Vpon her heed, they her into hal brought
And there she was honoured as she ought

Thus hath this pytous day a blysful ende
For euery man and woman doth hys myght
Thys daye in myrth and reuel to dyspende
Tyl on the welken shone the sterres bryght
For more solempne in euery mannes syght
Thys feest was, and greater of costage
Then was the reuel of her mariage

wel many a yere, in hye prosperite
Lyuen these two, in concorde and in rest
And richely hys doughter maried he
Vnto a lorde, one of the worthyest
Of al Italye, and then in peace and rest
Hys wyues father in hys courte he kepte
Tyl that hys soule out of hys body crepte

Hys sonne succeedeth in hys heritage
In reste and peace, after hys fathers day
And fortunate was eke in mariage
Al put he not hys wyfe in great assaye
Thys worlde is not so stronge, it is no naye
As it hath ben in olde tymes yore
And herkneth what thautour sayth therfore

THis story is said not for þ wiues shal
Folowe Grisyld, in al humilite (be
For it were inportable, tho they wol
But that euery wyght in hys degre (be
Sholde be constante, in al aduersite
As was Grisild, wherfore Petrarke writeth
This story, wbych wb hye style he endyteth.

For syth a woman was so patient
Vnto a mortal man, wel more we oughte
Receyue al in gree that God vs sent
For great skyll he preueth that he wrought
But he ne tempteth no man that he bought

As sayeth saynt Jame, yf ye hys pystel rede
he preueth folke but a daye, it is no drede

And suffreth vs as for our exercyse
wyth sharpe scourges of aduersyte
wel ofte to be beaten, in sondey wyse
Not for to knowe our wyl, for certes he
Or we were borne, knewe al our freite
And for our best, is al hys gouernaunce
Let vs lyue then in vertuous sufferaunce.

But one word herkneth lordynges or ye go
It were ful harde to fynde now a dayes
In al a countre Grisyldes thre or two
For yf they were put to suche assayes
The golde of hem hath so bad a layes
wyth brasse, for though it be fayre at eye
It wolde rather braste a two then plye

For which here, for ỹ wyues loue of Bathe
whose lyfe and secte, myghty god mayntene
In hygh maystry, or els were it skathe
I wyl wyth lusty herte, fresshe and grene
Saye you a songe, to glade you I wene
And let vs ryme of ernest matere
Herkeneth my songe, ỹ sayth in thys manere

¶ Lenuoye de Chaucer a les
mariz de nostre temps.

Grisylde is deed, & eke her pacience
And both at ones buryed in Itayle
For which I crye in open audience
No wedded man be so hardy to assayle
hys wyues pacience, in trusse to fynde
Grisyldes, for in certayne he shal fayle.

O noble wyues, ful of hye prudence
Let no humilite your tonge nayle
Ne let no clerke haue cause ne diligence
To wryte of you a storye of suche marueyle
As of Grisylde, pacient and kynde
Lest Chechisace swalow you in her entraile

Folowyth Ecco, that holdeth no sylence
But euer answereth at the countre tayle
Beth not abasshed for your innocence
But sharpely taketh on you the gouernayle
Enprynteth wel thys lesson in your mynde
For comen profyte, sythnesse it maye auayle

Ne dredeth hem not, doth hem no reuerẽce
For though thyn husbãd armed be in mayle
The arrowes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce hys brest, & eke hys aduentayle
In ielousye eke, loke thou hym bynde
And ỹ shal make him couch as doth a quayle

yf ỹ be fayre, there folke bene in presence
Shewe thou thy bysage, & thyne apparayle
yf thou be foule, be fre of thy dyspence
To get the frendes aye do thy trauayle
Be aye of chere, as lyght as lefe on lynde
And let hym care, wepe, wryngе, and wayle

Ye archwyues, stõdeth aye at your defence
Syth ye be stronge, as is a great camayle
Ne suffreth not, that men do you offence
And ye sklendre wyues, feble as in batayle
Beth eygre as any tygre is in Inde
Aye clappeth as a myl, I you counsayle.

¶ Here endeth the clerkes tale of Or-
forde, and here foloweth the
wordes of our hoost.

This worthy clerk, whẽ ended was his tale
Our hoost sayd and swore by cockes bones
Me were leuer then a barel of ale
My wyfe at home had herd this legẽde ones
Thys is a gentle tale for the nones
As to my purpose, wyste ye my wyl
But thynge that wol not be, let it be styl.

¶ Here ende the wordes of our hoste,
and here foloweth the Franke-
leyns prologue.

These old gentyll Britons in her dayes
Of dyuers aduentures maden layes
Rymed fyrst in her mother tonge
which layes, ỹ her instrumentes they songe
Or els reden hem for her pleasaunce
And one of hem haue I in remembraunce
whyche I shal saye, as wyllinge as I can
But syrs, bycause I am a borel man
At my begynnynge fyrst I you beseche
Haue me excused of my rude speche
I lerned neuer rethorike certayne
Thynge that I speke, mote be bare & playne
I slepte neuer on the mounte of Pernaso
Ne lerned neuer Marcus Tullius Cicero
Coloures ne knowe I none, withouté drede
But suche coloures as growen in the mede
Or els suche as men dyen or paynte
Coloures of rhetorike, ben to me quaynte
My spirite feleth not of suche matere
Thys is my tale, yf ye wol it here.

¶ Here endeth the Frankeleyns
prologue.



Here begynneth the Frankeleyns tale.

IN Armorike, ỹ called is britain
There was a knyght, that loued and dyd hys payne
To serue ladyes in hys beſt wyſe
And many a labour, & many a great empryſe
He for hys lady wrought, er ſhe were wonne
For ſhe was one the fayreſt vnder ſonne
And eke therto cõmen of hye kynrede
That wel vnneth durſt thys knyght for drede
Tel her hys wo, hys payne, and his dyſtreſſe
But at the laſte, ſhe of her worthyneſſe
And namely for hys meke obeyſaunce
Hath ſuche a pyte caught of hys penaunce
That pryuely ſhe fyl of hys accorde
To take hym for her huſbonde & her lorde
Of ſuch lordſhip, as mẽ haue ouer her wiues
And for to lede in the more blyſſe her lyues
Of hys fre wyl, he ſwore her as a knyght
That neuer in al her lyfe, daye ne nyght
Ne ſholde he take vpon hym no mayſtry
Agayne her wyl, ne kythe her ielouſye
But her obeye, and folowe her wyl in al
As any louer to hys lady ſhal
Saue that the name of ſouerayntè
That wolde he haue, for ſhame of his degre.
She thanked him, & with ful great humbleſſe
She ſayd: ſyr, ſyth of your gentryneſſe
Ye profred me to haue ſo large a rayne
Ne wolde god neuer betwyxte vs twayne
As in my gylt, were it eyther warre or ſtryfe
Syr, I wol be your trewe humble wyfe
Haue here my trouth, fyl that my herte breſt
Thus ben they both in quiete and in reſt.

For one thynge ſyrs, ſafely dare I ſeyne
That frendes, euerych other muſt obeyne
yf they wol longe holden compaynye
Loue wol not be conſtrayned by mayſtry
when mayſtry cõmeth, the god of loue anon
Beateth hys wynges, & farewel he is gone
Loue is a thynge, as any ſpirite free
women of kynde deſyren lyberte
And not to be conſtrayned as a thral
And ſo done men, yf I ſothe ſay ſhal
Loke who that moſte patient is in loue
He is at hys auauntage al aboue
Pacience is an hye vertue certayne
For it ouercomyth, as theſe clerkes payne
Thynges that rygour ſhal neuer attayne
For euery word mẽ may not chyde or playne
Learneth to ſuffre, or elſ ſo mote I gone
Ye ſhal it lerne, whether ye wol or none
For in thys world certayn no wyght ther is
That he ne doth or ſayeth ſometyme amys
Ire, ſykneſſe, or conſtellacion
wyne, woo, or chaungynge of complection
Cauſeth ful often to done amyſſe or ſpeken
On euery wronge, a mã may not be wreken
After the tyme muſt be temperaunce

To

To euery wight that can of gouernaunce
And therfore, hath this worthy wyse knight
To lyue in ease, suffraunce her hight
And she to hym ful wyfely gan swere
That neuer shulde there be defaut in here
Here may men se, humble and wyse accorde
Thus hath she take her seruant & her lorde
Seruaunt in loue, and lorde in mariage
Than was he bothe in lordship and seruage
Seruage: nay, but in lordshyp aboue
Sythen he hath both his lady and his loue
His lady certes, and his wyfe also
The which that lawe of londe accordeth to
And whan he was in this prosperite
Home with his wife he goth, in to his coûtre
Not fer fro Denmarke, ther his dwelling was
where as he lyueth in ioye and in solas
who coude tel, but he had wedded be
The ioye, the ease, and the prosperite
That is betwixt an husbande & his wyfe
Euermore lasted this blyssful lyfe
Lyl that this knyght, of which I speke thus
That of Caerr Iudā, was cleped Arueragus
Shope him to dwel a yere or twayne
In Englande, that cleped was Britayne
To seken in armes worship and honour
For al his lust he sette in suche labour
And dwelt there two yere, the boke saith thus
Now wol I stynt of this Arueragus
And speke I wol of Dorigen his wyfe
That loueth her husbonde as her hertes lyfe
For his absence, wepeth she and syketh
As don these noble wyues whan hem lyketh
She mourneth, waylyth, fasteth, & playneth
Desyre of his presence, her so constrayneth
That al this wyde worlde set she at nought
Her frendes, whiche knewe her heuy thought
Conforten her, in al that euer they may
They prechen her, and tellen her night & day
That causeles she slewe her self, alas
And euery comfort possyble in this caas
They don to her, with al her busynesse
And al for to maken her leue her heuynesse.
By processe, as ye knowē euerychone
Men mowen so longe grauen in a stone
Tyl some figure therin printed be
So longe han they comforted her tyl, she
Receyued hath by hope and by reson
The emprintyng of her constellacion
Through which her great sorow gā aswage
She may not alway indure in suche a rage
And eke Arueragus in al this care
Hath sent his letters home of his welfare
And that he wol come hastely agayne
Or elis had this sorowe her herte slayne.
Her frendes sawe her sorowe gan to slake
And prayden her on knees, for goddes sake
To come and romen in her compayne
Away to dryuen her derke fantasye
And fynally she graunted that requeste
For wel she sawe it was for the beste.
Now stode her castel faste by the see
And ofte with her frendes walked she
Her to disporte on the bankes hey
where as she may shyppes and barges sey
Sayling her course, where hem lyst go
But yet was that a parcel of her wo
For to her self ful ofte alas sayd she
Is there no shyppe, of so many as I se
wol bring home my lorde: thā were my herte
warysshed of these bytter paynes smerte.
Another tyme, wolde she syte and thynke
And caste her eyen downward fro the brynke
But whan she sawe the gresly rockes blake
For very feare, so wolde her herte quake
That on her fete she myght not her susteene
Than wolde she syte adown vpon the greene
And pitously in to the see beholde
And say right thus, with sorouful sykes colde
Eterne god, that through thy purueyance
Ledest this worlde, by certayne gouernance
In vayn as men sayn, dooste thou nothing make
But lorde, these grisly fendely rockes blake
That semen rather a foule confusyon
Of werke, than a fayre creacion
Of suche a parfyte god, wyse and ful stable
why haue ye wrought this werke vnresonable
For by this werke, north, south, west, ne este
There nys foster, man, bryde, ne beste
It doth no good, but anoyeth
See ye not lorde, howe mākinde it distroyeth
An hundred thousande bodyes of mankynde
Haue rockes slayn, al be they not in mynde
Sin mākind is so fayre aparte of thy werke
That thou it madest like thyn owne werke
Than semed it ye had a great charite
Towarde mākynde, but how thā may it be
That ye suche meines maken it to distroyen
which meines don no good, but euer anoyen.
I wote wel clerkes wol sayne as hem lest
By argumentes, that al is for the best
Though I ne can not the causes wel knowe
But thinke god, þ made the wynde to blowe
As kepe my lorde, this is my conclusyon

To clerkes let I al thys disputacion
And wolde God that al these rockes blake
were sonken in to hel for hys sake.
These rockes slee myne herte for feare
Thus wolde she say wt many a pytous teare
Her frendes sawe it was for her no disport
To romen by the see, but disconfort
And shapen hem to playen somwhere elles
They leden her by ryuers and by welles
And eke in other places delytables
They daunceen and they playen at the tables
So on a daye, right in the morowe tyde
Unto a gardeyne, that was there beside
In which that they had made her ordinance
Of vytayles, and other purueyance
They gone and playen hem al the longe day
And thys was in the syxte morowe of May
which May hath parted wt his soste shoures
Thys gardayne ful of leues and of floures
And craste of mannes hande so curiously
Arayed had thys garden trewly
That neuer nas there garden of such pryse
But yf it were the very paradyse
The odour of floures, and the freshe syght
wolde haue made any herte lyght
That euer was borne, but yf to great sickenesse
Or to great sorowe helde it in dystresse
So was it ful of beautye, wyth plesaunce.
And after dyner gone they daunce
And synge also, saue Dorigene alone
That yet vnto her selfe made her mone
For she ne sey hym on the daunce go
That was her husbande, and her loue also
But nathelasse, she muste her tyme abyde
And wyth good hope, let her sorowe slyde.
Upon thys daunce, amonge other men
Daunced a squyer before Dorigen
That freshest was, and lolyest of aray
As to my dome, then is the moneth of May
He syngeth & daunceth, passynge euery man
That is or was, sythen the worlde began
And therwythal, & men shulde hym descrine
One of the best farynge men on lyue
Yonge, stronge, vertuous, ryche, and wyse
And welbeloued, and holden of great pryse
And shortly, yf I the soth tel shal
Unwetynge of thys Dorigene at al
Thys lusty squyer, seruaunt to Venus
whych ycleped was Aurelius
Had loued her beste of any creature
Two yere and more, as was hys auenture
But neuer durst he tel her hys greuaunce
wythouten coppe he dronke al hys penaunce
He was dyspayred, nothynge durst he say
Save in hys songes, somwhat wold he wray
Hys wo, as in general complaynynge
He said he loued, and was beloued nothinge
Of whych matter made he many layes
Songes, complaynetes, roundels, virelayes
How that he durste not hys sorowe tel
But languyshe, as doth a fury in hel
And dye he muste (he sayd) as dyd Ecco
For Narcisius, that durst not tel hys wo
In other maner then ye herde me say
He durst not he to her hys wo bewray
Save peraventure somtyme at daunces
There yonge folke kepen her obseruaunces
It may wel be, he loked on her face
In suche a wyse, as men that aslen grace
But nothynge wyst she of hys entent
Nathelesse it happed, er they thence went
Because that he was her neyghbour
And was a man of worshyppe and honour
And had knowen hym of tymes yore
They fel in speche, & so forth more & more
Unto hys purpose drowe Aurelius
And when he sawe hys tyme he sayd thus.
Madame (q he) by god yt this worlde made
So yt I wyste, yt I myght your herte glade
I wolde that day, that your Arueragus
went ouer the see, that I Aurelius
Had went ther yt I shuld neuer come agayn
For wel I wote my seruyce is in vayne
My guerdon nys but brestyng of myne herte
Madame reuth vpon my paynes smerte
For wyth one worde ye may me slee or save
Here at your foote godwold yt I were grave
I ne haue as nowe no leyser more to sey
Have mercy swete, or ye wol do me dey.
She gan to loke vpon Aurelius
Is thys your wyl (q she) and sayd ye thus
Neuer erste (q she) ne wyst I what ye ment
But nowe I knowe Aurelius your entent
By thylke god, that yaue me soule and lyfe
Ne shal I neuer be vntrewe wyfe
In word ne i werke, as ferre as I haue wyt
I wol be hys to whom I am knyt
Take thys for a fynal answere of me
But after thys in play thus sayd she.
Aurelius (q she) by god aboue
yet wol I graunt you to ben your loue
(Sythen I se you so pytously complayne)
Loke what daye that endelonge Britayne
Ye remeue al the rockes, stone by stone

That

That they ne let shyppe ne bote to gone
I say whē ye haue made these coostes so clene
Of rockes, that there nys no stone ysene
Then wol I loue you best of any man
Yeet haue my trouth, in al that euer I can.
Is there none other grace in you (q̄ he)
No by that lorde (q̄ she) that maked me
For wel I wote that it shal neuer betyde
Let suche folye out of your herte glyde
what deyntye shulde a man haue in hys lyfe
For to go loue another mannes wyfe
That hath her body whē so that hym lyketh
Aurelius ful ofte sore syketh
Wo was Aurely, when he thys herde
And wt a sorowful chere he thus answerde.
Madame (q̄ he) thys were impossible
Then mote I dye on sodayne death horrible
And wyth that worde he turned hym anone.
Tho come her other frendes euerychone
And in the alleyes romeden vp and doun
And nothynge wyst of thys conclusioun
But sodenly began to reuel newe
Tyl that the brygbt sonne lolde hys hewe
For the orizont hath reft the sonne his light
This is as much to save as it was nyght
And home they gone in toye and in solas
Saue onely wretched Aurelius, alas
He to hys house is gone with sorowful harte
He sayd he myght not from hys death astarte
Hym semed, that he felte hys herte colde
Up to heuen hys handes gan he holde
And on hys knees bare, he set hym adoun
And in hys rauynge sayd thys oryson
For very wo out of hys wytte he brayde
He ne wyst what he spake, but thus he sayde
With pitous herte hath his complaynt begonne
Unto the goddes, and fyrst vnto the sonne
He sayd: God Appollo and gouernour
Of euery planete, herbe, tre, and flour
That yeuest after thy declinacion
To vche of hem hys tyme and ceson
As tyme herberowe chaungeth lowe & hye
Lorde Phebus, caste thy mercyable eye
On wretched Aurelius, wbych am but lorne
Lo lorde, my lady hath my death ysworne
wythout gylte, but thy benignite
Upon my deadly herte haue some pyte
For wel I wote lorde Phebus, yf ye lelle
Ye may me helpe saue my lady belle
Nowe vouche ye saue, that I you deuyse
Howe that I may be holpen & in what wyse
Your blysful suster Lucina the shene
That of the see is goddesse and quene
Though Neptunus hath deite in the see
Yet emperesse aboue hym is she
Ye knowen wel lorde, rygbt as her desyre
Is to be quyckened and lyghted of your fyre
For wbych that she foloweth you ful besely
Rygbt so the see desyreth naturally
To folowen her that is goddesse
Both of the see, and ryuers more and lesse
wherfore lorde Phebus, thys is my request
Do thys myracle, or do myne herte brest
That nowe nexte at thys opposicion
which in sygne shalbe the lyon
As prayeth her so great a floode to brynge
That fyue fadome at the lest, it ouer sprynge
The hyest rocke in Armorike Britayne
And let thys floode dure yeares twayne
Then rekke to my lady may I saye
Holdeth your beste, the rockes ben awaye
Thys thynge may ye lyghtly done for me
Pray her to gone no faster course then ye
I say thus, prayeth your suster that she go
No faster course then ye in yeres two
Then shal she be at the ful alway
And sprynge floode lastyng both nyght & day
And but she vouchsafe in suche manere
To graunt me my souerayne lady dere
Pray her to synken euery rocke adoun
Into her owne darke regioun
Under the grounde, there pluto dwelleth in
Or neuer more shal I my lady wyn
Thy temple in Delphos, wol I barefote seke
O lorde Phebus, se the teres on my cheke
And on my payne haue some compassioun
And wyth ỳ worde, in swoune he fel adoun
And longe tyme he lay in a traunce
His brother, which ỳ knew of his penaunce
Up caught hym, and to bed hym brought
Dyspayred in thys turmēt & this thought
Lette I thys wofful creature lye
Chese he whether he wol lyue or dye.
Aruyragus wyth reale and great honour
(As he that was of chyualry the floure)
Is comen home, and other worthy men
O blysful arte thou nowe Dorigen
That hast thy lusty husbōde in thyne armes
That freshe knight, ỳ worthy man of armes
That loueth the, as hys owne hertes lyfe
Nothynge lyst hym to be ymaginatyfe
Yf any wyght had spokē (while he was out)
To her of loue, therof had he no dout
He entendeth not to suche matere

But direly, infelly, it maketh her good chere
And thus in loye & blysse let hym dwel
Now of woful Dorigen wol I tel
¶ In langour and in contynuel dyspleasaunce
Thus pyne and mope, ley wretched Dorigen
Er ought bifalle on erth he myght gone
Ne comforte in thys tyme had he none
Save of hys brother whych was a clerke
He knewe of al thys wo and al thys werke
For to none other creature certayne
Of thys mater durst he no worde sayne
Under hys brest he bare it more feare
Then euer dyd Pamphilus for Galathe
Hys brest was hole wythout for to sene
But in hys herte ape, was the arowe kene
And wel ye knowen that of a surfaunce
In surgery, is perilous the cure
But men myght touch ꝑ arow or come therby
Hys brother wepeth and wayleth pryuely
Tyl at the last hym fel in remembraunce
That whyle he was at Orliaunce in Fraunce
(As yonge clerkes ponge that ben lykerous)
To reden artes they ben curious
Seken in euery halke and in euery herne
Perticuler science for to lerne
He hym remembred that vpon a day
At Orliaunce in studye a boke he sey
Of magyke naturel, whych hys felawe
That was in that tyme a bacheler of lawe
Al were he there to lerne another craft
Had pryuely vpon hys dere playe
Whych booke spake of mochel operacions
Touchynge the .xxviij. mansions
That longen to the moone, and such folye
As in our dayes is not worth a flye
For holy church sayeth in our byleue
Ne suffreth none illusyon vs to greue
And when thys boke was in his remembraunce
Anone for ioye hys herte gan daunce
And to hym selfe he sayd pryuely
My brother shalbe warysshed sykerly
For I am syker that there be sciences
By whych men maken dyuers apparences
Suche as these subtel tregetours play
For ofte at festes have I wel herde say
That tregetours, within an hal large
Have made come in water and a barge
And in the hall rowen vp and doun
Somtyme hath semed a grym lyoun
And somtyme flowres sprynge as in a mede
Somtyme a vyne, and grapes whyte & rede
Somtyme a castel of lyme and stone
And when hym lyked, voyden hem anone
Thus semed it to euery mannes syghe.
¶ Now then conclude I thus, ye ꝑ I myght
At Orliaunce some olde felawe fynde
That had thise moones mansions in mynde
Or other magyke naturel aboue
He shuld wel make my brother have his loue
For wyth an apparaunce a clerke may make
To mannes syghe, that al the rockes blake
Of Britayne, were voyded euerychone
And shyppes by the brynke to comen & gone
And in such forme endure a yere or two
Then were my brother warysshed of hys wo
Then muste she nedes holde her behest
Or elis he shal shame her at the lest.
¶ what shuld I make a lenger tale of thys
Vnto hys brothers bedde he comen is
And suche comforte he yaue hym for to gone
To Orliaunce, that he vp sterte anone
And on hys way then is he fayth yfare
In hope to ben relesed of hys care.
¶ when they were comen almoste to ꝑ cyte
(But ye it were a two furlonge or thre)
A yonge clerke romyng by hym selfe they met
whych that in latyn thryftely hem gret
And afterwarde he sayd a wonder thynge
I knowe the cause of your comynge
And er they farther any foote wente
He tolde hem al that was in her entente.
¶ Thys Breton clerke asked hem of felowes
The whych he had knowen in olde dayes
He answered hym, that they dede were
For whych he wept ofte ful many a tere
¶ Downe of his hous Aurelius light anone
And wyth this magicien forth is he gone
Home to hys house, & made hym wel at ese
Hem lacked no vytaile that hem might plese
So wel arayed an house as there was one
Aurelius in hys lyfe sawe neuer none.
¶ He shewed hym, or he went to supperе
Forestes and parkes, ful of wylde dere
There sawe they hertes, wyth hornes hye
The greteste that euer were sene wyth eye
He sey of hem an hundred slayne with houndes
And some of arowes bled yt vyter woundes
He sawe, when voyded were the wylde dere
These fauconers, vpon a fayre ryuere
That wyth the hawkes han the heron slayne
Tho sawe he knightes ryding in a playne
And after thys he dyd hym suche pleasaunce
That he hym shewed hys lady in a daunce
On which hym selfe daunced as hym thought

And

And whil this maister, ꝑ this magike wrought
Hadde it was tyme, he clapped his bokes to
And farwel oure cruel, al was ago
And remeued neuer out of his house
Whyle they stode al this fyght merueylous
But in his studye there his bokes be
They stode ful fyl, no wight but they thre
¶ To him this maister called his squyer
And sayd hym thus, is redy our supper
Almost an hour it is, I vndertake
Sythen I you bade our supper redy make
Whan that these worthy men went with me
Into my studye, there as my bokes be
¶ Sire (q the squier) whan it lyketh you
It is al redy, though ye wel right nowe.
¶ Go we suppe than (q he) for the best
These auerous folke sore tyme mote haue rest
And after supper fel they in trete
what somme shuld this maisters guerdon be
To remeue al the rockes of Britayne
And eke fro Gyronde to the mouth of Sayne
¶ He made it straunge, & swore so god him saue
Lasse than a thousand pounde wold he not haue
Ne gladly for that somme nolde he it don.
¶ Aurelius with dyrkful herte anon
Answerde thus: Fye on a thousande pounde
This worde wolde, which men say is roūde
I wolde it yeue, yf I were lorde of it
This bargayne is ful dere, for we be knyt
Ye shal be payde truely by my trouthe
But loke nowe for no negligence or slouthe
Ye tarryen vs here no lenger than to morowe
Nay (q this clerke) here my trouth to borowe
¶ To bedde is gon Aurelius whan him leste
And wel nye al nyght he had his reste
what for his labour, and his hope of blysse
His woful herte of penaunce had a lysse.
¶ Upon the morowe whan that it was day
To Britayne toke they the right way
Aurelius, and this magicyen hym besyde
And ben descended there they wolde abyde
And this was, as the boke doth remembre
In the colde frosty seson of Decembre.
¶ Phebus wared olde, & hewed lyke laton
That afore in his hote declynacion
Shone as ꝑ brenning golde with stremes bryght
But nowe in Capricorne adowne he lyght
where as he shone ful pale, I dare wel sayne
The bytter frostes, with the sleet and rayne
Destroyed hath the grene in euery yerde
Janus sit by the fyre with double berde
And drynketh of his bugle horne the wyne
Biforn him stont brawne of the tusked swyne
And nowel crydeth euery lusty man.
¶ Aurelius, in al that euer he can
Doth to his maister chere and reuerence
And prayeth him to don his diligence
To bringen him out of his peynes smerte
Or with a swerde that he wold slyt his herte
This clerke suche routhe hath on this mā
That night & day he spedeth him that he can
To wayte a tyme of hys conclusyon
This is to say, to make illusyon
Or suche an apparence or iogelrye
I ne can no termes of astrologye
That she and euery wight shulde wene & say
That of Britayne the rockes were away
Or elis they were sonken vnder the grounde
Thus at the laste he hath his tyme yfounde
To make his iapes and his wrecchydnesse
Of suche superstycious cursydnesse
His tollytan tables he forthe brought
Ful wel corrected, hym lacked nought
Neyther his collecte, ne his expans yeres
Ne his rootes, ne his other geres
As dyn his centrys, and his argumentes
And his proporcionel conuenyences
For his equacions in euery thyng
And by his eyght spheres in his werkyng
He knew ful wel howe far alnath was shoue
Fro the heed of thylke fyxe Aries aboue
That in the nynthe sphere consydered is
Ful subtelly he had calked al this
And whan he had founde hys fyrst mansyon
He knewe the remenaunt by proporcion
And knewe the rysyng of the moone wele
And in suche face, the terme and euery dele
And knewe also his other obseruaunces
For suche illusyons and suche mischaunces
As hethen folke vsed in thylke dayes
For whiche ne maked he no lenger delayes
But thrugh his magike, for a weke or tway
It semed that al the rockes were away.
¶ Aurelius, whiche that dispayred is
whether he shal haue his loue, or fare amys
Awayteth night and day on thys myracle
And whan he knewe there was non obstacle
But ꝑ voyded were these rockes ryerychon
Downe to the maisters fete he fel anon
And sayd, I woful wrecche Aurelius
Thanke you lorde and lady myne Venus
That me hath holpen fro my cares colde
And to ꝑ temple his way forth hath he holde
where as he knewe he shulde his lady se

And whan he hadde his tyme, anon right he
With dredful herte, & with humble chere
Salued hath his soueraine lady dere.
Loue right ful lady (quod this woful man)
whom I serue and loue, as I best can
And lothest were of al this worlde displese
Were it that I for you hadde suche disese
That I moste dye here at youre fete anon
Nought wold I telle you how wo me is begon
But certes either moste I dye or playne
Ye slee me gyltelesse for verry payne
But of my dethe, though ye haue no routhe
Auyse you, er that ye breken youre trouthe
Repenteth you, for that vike god aboue
For ye slee me, hyeraule that I you loue
For madame, wel ye woote that ye haue right
Nor that I chalenge any thyng of right
Of you my souerayn lady, but of your grace
But in a garden yonde in suche a place
Ye wotte right wel what ye hyght me
And in myn honde your trouth plyght ye
To loue me best, god wotte ye sayd so
Al be it I am vnworthy therto
Madame I speke it for the honour of you
More than for to saue myn hertes lyfe nowe
I haue done right as ye commaunded me
Auntyl ye vouchsafe, ye may go se
Doth as you list, hauyth your trouthe in mynde
For quicke or deed, right there ye shal me fynde
In youre lythe al to do me lyue or deye
But wel I wote the rockes ben awaye
Her toke his leue, and she astonyed stode
In al her face there nas a droppe of blode
She wende neuer han come in suche a trappe
Alas (quod she) that euer this shulde happe
For wende I neuer by possibylite
That suche a myster or meruayle might be
It is ayenst the processe of nature
And home she gothe a sorouful creature
For very feare vnnethes may she go
She wepeth and waylyth a day or two
And swowneth, that it was routhe to se
But why it was to no wight tolde she
For out of towne was gon Arueragus
But to her selfe she spake, and sayd thus
In her complaynt, as ye shal after here
With face pale, & with sorouful chere.
Alas (quod she) on the fortune I playne
That vnware hast wrapped me in thy chayne
Fro whiche to escape, wot I no socoure
Saue onely dethe, or elis dishonoure
One of these two behoueth me to chese
But nathelesse, yet had I leuer to lese
My lyfe, than of my body to haue a shame
Or knowe my selfe false, or lese my name
And with my dethe, I may be quyte ywys
Hath there not many a wyfe er this
And many a mayd, slayn her selfe alas
Rather than with her body done wrongas
And certes lo, these stories beren witnesse
whan thurry tyrauntes, ful of cursednesse
Had slayne Hyldon, in Athenes at the feste
They commaunded his doughters to areste
And bringen hem byfore hem in despyte
Al naked, to fulfyl her foule delyte
And in her fathers bloode, he dyd hem dance
Upon the pauement, god yeue him mischaunce
For which these woful maydens ful of drede
Rather than they wold lesen her maydenhede
They prively ben sterte in to a wel
And drenched hem selfe, as bokes tell.
They of Messene let enquire and se
Of Lacidomony fyfty maydens che
On which they wolde haue don her lechery
But there was none of al that company
That she nas slayne, and with a glad entente
Chese rather for to dyen, than for to assent
To ben oppressed of her maydenhede
why shulde I than to dye ben in drede.
Lo eke the tyraunt Aristocides
That loued a mayde, hight Cymphalydes
whan that her father slayne was on a nyght
Unto Dyanes temple gothe she anon right
And hente the ymage, with her armes two
Fro whiche ymage wolde she neuer go
No wight might fro it her hondes race
Tyl she was slayne, right in the selfe place.
Now sythnes maydens had suche despyte
To ben defouled with mannes foule delyte
wel ought a wyfe rather her selfe slee
Than be defouled, as thynketh me.
What shal I say of Hasdruballes wyfe
That at Cartage byraft her selfe her lyfe
For whan she sawe the romanes wan the toun
She tok her chyldren al, and lepte adown
Into the fyre, and chese rather to dye
Than any roman dyd her vilanye.
Hath not Lucrece slayne her selfe, alas
At Rome, there she oppressed was
Of Tarquyne, for her thought it was shame
To lyue, whan that she had lost her name.
The eyght maydens of Meleye also
Han slayn hem selue for verry drede and wo
Rather than folke of Gaule shuld hē oppresse

¶ So than a thousande stories, as I gesse
Couthe I nowe tel, as touchyng this matere
¶ whan Hasdrubas wyfe was slayn, his wife so dere
Her selfe slowe, and let her blode to glyde
In Hasdrubas woundes, brode and wyde
And sayd, my body at the leste way
There shal no wight defoule yf I may.
¶ What shulde I mo ensamples herof sayne
Sythens that so many han hem selfe slayn.
Wel rather than they wolde defouled be
I wol conclude that it is best for me
Wel rather slee my selfe in some maner
As dyd demountous doughter dere
Bycause that she nolde not defouled be.
¶ O Sedasus, it is ful great pyte
To reden howe thy doughters dyden, alas
That slowen hem selfe for such a maner cas
As great a pyte was it or wel more
The Theban mayden, that for Nychanore
For one of Macedone had her oppressed
With her dethe her maydenhede she redressed
¶ What shal I sayne of Nycerates wyfe
That for such case bitraste her selfe her lyfe
¶ Howe trewe was eke to Alcibyades
His loue, that for to dyen rather chees
Than for to suffren his body vnburyed be
¶ Lo whiche a wyfe was Alceste (q she)
What sayth Homere of good Penelope
Al Grece knoweth of her chastyte.
¶ Parde of Laodomia is writen thus
That whan at Troy was slayn Protheselaus
No lenger nolde she lyue after his day.
¶ The same of noble Porcia tel I may
Withouten Brutus couthe she not lyue
To whom she had al her herte ygyue.
¶ The parfyte wyfehode of Artemisy
Honoured is, throughout al Barbary
¶ O Thenta quene, thy wifely chastyte
To al wyues may a myrrour be.
The same thyng I saye of Bilia
Of Rodogone, and eke Valeria.
¶ Thus playned Dorigene a day or twey
Purposyng euer that she wolde dey
But nathelesse vpon the thyrde nyght
Home came Arueragus, the worthy knight
And asked her why she wepte so sore
And she gan wepen euer lenger the more
¶ Alas (q she) that euer was I borne
Thus haue I said (q she) thus haue I sworn
And tolde hem al, as ye haue herde before
It nedeth not to reherce it no more.
¶ This husbonde wt glad chere in softe wyse
Answerde and sayd, as I shal you deuyse
Is there aught els Dorigene but this.
¶ Nay nay (q she) god helpe me so as wys
This is to moche, and it were goddes wyl.
¶ Ye wyfe (q he) let slepe that is fyl
It may be wel yet parauenture to day
Ye shal your trouthe holde by my fay
For god so wysly haue mercy on me
I had wel leuer stycked for to be
For very loue, whiche that I to you haue
But yf ye shulde your trouthe saue
Trouth is the hyest thyng that mé may kepe
But with that worde he brast anon to wepe
And said, I you forbyd on payne of dethe
That neuer whiles you lasteth lyfe or breethe
To no wight tel of this misauenture
As I may beste I wol my wo endure
Ne make no countenaunce of heuynesse
That folke of you may deme harme ne gesse
And forthe he cleped a squier and a mayde
Gothe forthe anon with Dorigene he sayde
And bringeth her in suche a place anone
They toke her leue, & on her way they gone
But they ne wyste why she thyder went
She nolde no wight tel her entent.
¶ This squier, whiche that hyght Aurelius
On Dorigen, whiche that was so amerous
Of auenture happed her to mete
Amydde the towne, right in the hye strete
As she wolde haue gon the way forthe right
Towarde the garden there as she had hyght
And he was to the garden warde also
For wel he spyed whan she wolde go
Out of her house, to any maner place
But thus they met of auenture or of grace
And he saluteth her with glad entent
And asked of her whyder that she went.
¶ And she answerde halfe as she were madde
Vnto the garden as my husbonde badde
My trouthe for to holde, alas alas.
Aurelius gan wondren of this caas
And in his herte had great compassyon
Of her there, and of her lamentation
And of Arueragus the worthy knyght
That bade her holde al that she had hyght
So loth he was y she shuld breke her trouth
And in hys herte he caught of it great routh
Consydryng the beste on euery syde
That fro his lust were hun better abyde
Than do so hye a churlishe wretchydnesse
Ayenst fraunchise, & ayenst al gentylnesse
For whiche in fewe wordes said he thus

Madame

Madame,sayche to your lorde Arueragus
That sythen I se this great gentylnesse
Of hym,and eke I se wel your distresse
That ye to me thus shuld holde your trouthe
Certes me thynketh it were great routhe
I haue wel leuer euer to suffre wo
Than departe the loue bytwyxt you two
I you relese madame into your honde
Quyte euery surement and euery bonde
That ye haue made to me,as here byforne
Sythens thylke tyme that ye were borne
my trouth I plight,I shal you neuer repreue
Of no behestе,and here I take my leue
As of the trewest and the beste wyfe
That euer yet I knewe in al my lyfe
But euery wight beware of her byhestе
On Dorigene remembreth at the lestе
Thus can a squyer done a gentyl dede
As wel as can a knyght,withouten drede.
She thonked hym vpon her knees al bare
And home vnto her husbonde is she fare
And told him al,as ye han herde me sayde
And be ye syker,he was so wel apayde
That it were vnpossible me to write
What shulde I longer of this case endyte
Arueragus,and Dorigen his wyfe
In souerayne blysse leden forthe her lyfe
Neuer after was there anger hem bytwene
He cherished her,as though she were a quene
And she was to him trewe for euermore
Of these two folkes ye get of me nomore.
Aurelius,that his coste hath al forlorne
Curseth the tyme that euer he was borne
Alas,(q he)alas that euer I behyght
Of pured golde a thousand pounde of weight
Vnto this philosopher,howe shal I do
I se no more,but that I am for do
Myne heritage mote I nedes sel
And be a begger,here may I no leger dwel
And shame al my kynrede in this place
But I of hym may get better grace
But nathelesse I wol of hym assay
At certayne dayes,yere by yere to pay
And thonke hym of hys great curtesye
My trouthe wol I kepe,I wol not lye.
With herte sore,he gothe vnto his coffer
And broughte golde vnto this philosopher
The value of fyue hundred pounde as I gesse
And hym besecheth of hys gentylnesse
To graunt him dayes of the remenaunt
And sayd,maister I dare wel make auaunt
I fayled neuer of my trouthe as yet
For syker ly my dette shal be quyt
Towardes you,howe that euer I fare
To gon a beggyng in my kyrtel bare
But wolde ye vouchesafe vpon surete
Two yere or thre for to respyte me
Than were I wel,for elis mot I sel
Myne heritage,there is no more to tel.
This philosopher soberly answerde
And sayd thus,whan he this worde herde
Haue I not holde couenaunt vnto the
Yes certes,wel and truely(q he)
Haste thou not had thy lady as the lyketh
No no(q he)and soothly he syketh
what was the cause,tel me yf that thou can.
Aurelius anon his tale began
And told hym al as ye han herde byfore
It nedeth not to reherce it any more.
He sayd Arueragus of gentylnesse
Had leuer dye in sorowe and in distresse
Than his wyfe were of her trouthe fals
The sorowe of Dorigene he told hym als
Howe lothe she was to ben a wycked wyfe
And that she had leuer haue loste her lyfe
And yt her trouth she swore through innocence
She neuer erste herde speke of apparence
That made me haue of her so great pyte
And right as freely as he sent her to me
As freely sent I her to hym agayne
This is al,I sayne,there nys no more to sayne.
The philosopher answerde,leue brother
Eueriche of you dyd gentilly to other
Thou arte a squier,and he is a knyght
But god forbyd,for his blessed myght
But yf a clerke coulde done a gentyl dede
As wel as any of you,it is do drede.
Syr I relese the thy thousande pounde
As now thou were crope out of the grounde
Ne neuer er nowe haddest thou known me
For syr,I wol not taken a peny of the
For al my crafte,ne nought for my trauayle
Thou haste ypayed right wel for my vitayle
It is ynough,and farwel,I haue good day
And toke his horse,and rode forthe on his way.
Lordynges this question wold I aske now
whiche was the moste fre,as thynketh you
Nowe telleth me,er that I ferther wende
I can no more,my tale is at an ende.

Here endeth the Frankeleyns tale,
and begynneth the seconde
nonnes prologue.

The

The mynistre & the norice vn-
to vyces
Which that men clepen in en
glishe idelenesse
That is porter of the yate of
delyces
To eschue, & by her contrarie her oppressse
That is to sayne, by lesul besynesse
wel ought we to don our entent
Lest that the fende through idelenesse vs hēt

For he that with his thousande cordes sye
Contynually vs wayteth to be clappe
whan he may man in ydelenesse espye
He can so lightely catche him in his trappe
Er that a man be hente, right by the lappe
Wenis not ware the fende hath him in honde
wel ought vs werche, & ydelenesse withstonde

And though men dredden neuer for to dye
yet se men wel by reson doutles
That ydelenesse is rote of slogardye
Of which there cometh neuer no good encres
And sothnes that slouth holdeth he in a les
Only to slepe, and for to eate and drynke
And to deuouren al that other swynke

And for to put vs from suche ydelnesse
That cause is of so great confusyon
I haue here done my saythful besynesse
After the legende in translacion
Right of thy glorious lyse and passyon
Thou vb thy garlōde, wrought vb rose & lely
The mene I, mayd and marter seynt Cecely

¶ And thou that arte floure of virgins all
Of whom that Bernarde lyst so wel to write
To the at my begynnyng lyst I cal
Thou comforte of vs wretches, do me endyte
Thy maydēs deth, ỳ wan thorow her merite
The eternal lyse, and of the fende victorye
As men may after rede in her storie

Thou mayde & mother, doughter of thy sōne
Thou well of mercy, synful soules cure
In whom that god of bounte chese for to wōne
Thou humble and hye ouer euery creature
Thou noblest, so farre ouer nature
That no disdayne the maker had of kynde
His sone in blonde & flesshe to clothe & wynde

Whiche in the cloystre of thy blisful sydis
Toke mannes shappe, the eterne loue & pees
That of the true compas lorde & gyde is
whom heuen, erthe, and see, withouten les
Aye heryen, and thou virgyne wemles
Bare of thy body, & dweldest mayden pure
The creatour of euery creature

Assembled is in the magnifycence
with mercy, goodnesse, and with suche pyt
That thou arte the sonne of excellence
Not onely that helpest hem that playen th
But often tyme of thy benignyte
Ful freely, or that men thyne helpe beseche
Thou goest before, and arte her lyues leche.

Now helpe thou blisful, & meke fayre mayde
We flemed wretche, in this desserte of gal
Thynke on the woman of Canane, that sayd
That whelpes eaten some of ỳ crōmes smal
That from her lordes table ben sal
And though ỳ I vnworthy doughter of Eue
Be synful, yet accepteth my beleue

And for ỳ fayth is deed withouten werkis
So for to werche, yeue me wytte and space
That I be qwyt from ỳ place ỳ most derke is
O thou that arte so fayre and ful of grace
Be myne aduocate in that hye place
There as without ende is songe Osanna
Thou Chuses mother, & doughter of Anna

And of thy light, my soule in prison lyght
That troubled is by the contagyon
Of my body, and also by the wyght
Of erthly luste, and also false affection
O hauen, O refute, O saluacion
Of hem that ben in sorowe and distresse
Now helpe, for to my werke I wol me dresse

yet I pray you that reden that I write
Forgeueth me, that I do no dyligence
This yike storie subtelly to endyte
For bothe haue I the wordes & the sentence
Of hym that at the sayntes reuerence
The storie wrote, and folowen her legende
And pray you that ye wol my werke amende

¶ Fyrst wol I you the name of seynt Cecily
Expowne, as men may in her storie se
It is to say in englishe, heuens lyly
For pure chastnesse of virgynite
Or for the wytnesse had of honestе

And

And grene of conſcience, and of good fame
The ſote ſauoure lyke was her name

Or Cecily is to ſay, the way to blynde
For the enſample was by good techyng
Or elis Cecily, as I writeen fynde
Is ioyned by a maner conioynyng
Of heuen and Lya, in her figuring
The heuen is ſet for thought of holynelle
And lya, for her lasbyng beſynelle

Cecily may che be ſayd in this maniere
wantyng of blyndnelle, for her great lyght
Of ſapience, and for her thewes clere
Or elis Lo, this maydens name bright
Of heuen & Leos cometh, of whiche by ryght
Men might the heuen of people her cal
Enſample of good and wyſe werkes al

For Leos people, in Engliſhe is to ſay
And right as men may in the heuen ſe
The ſunne, and moone, & ſterres euery way
Right ſo men goſtly, in this mayden ſe
Hauen of faythe, the great magnanymite
And eke the clereneſſe hole of ſapience
And ſondrie werkes, bright of excellence

And right ſo as theſe philoſophers write
That heuen is ſwyfte, rounde, & eke byrnyng
Right ſo was fayre Cecily the whyte
Ful ſwyfte and buſy in euery good workyng
And rounde and hole in good perſeuerynge
And byrnyng euer in charyte ful bright
Nowe haue I declared you what ſhe hight.

Here endeth the ſeconde nonnes Prologue, and begynneth her tale.



This mayden bright Cecile, as her lyfe ſayth
was comen of Romanes, and of noble kynde (fayth
And ſo forthe foſtred vp in the
Of Chriſt, & bare his goſpel in her mynde
She neuer ceſſed, as I writeen fynde
Of her prayere, and god to loue and drede
Beſechyng hym to kepe her maydenhede

And whan this mayde ſhulde vnto a man
I wedded be, that ful yonge of age
whiche that cleped was Valeryan
And daye was come of her maryage
She ful deuoute and humble in her corage
Vnder her robe of golde, ſ ſate ful fayre
Had next her fleſhe cleed her in an heyre

And whyles that the organs made melody
To god alone thus in herte ſonge ſhe
O lorde, my ſoule and eke my body gye
Vnwemmed, leſte I confounded be

And for his loue that dyed vpon a tre
Euery seconde or thirde day she faste
Ye bydding in her orisons ful faste.

¶ The night came, & to bedde must she gone
With her husbonde, as often is the manere
And prively she sayd vnto hym anon
O swete and wel beloued spouse dere
There is a counsayle, and ye wol it here
Which that right fayne I wold to you sayne
So that ye me ensure, it not to bewrayne.

¶ Valeryan gan faste vnto her swere
That for no cas, ne thyng that myght be
He shulde neuer to none bewrayen here
And than at erste, thus to hym sayd she
I haue an angel, whiche that loueth me
That wt grete loue, where so I wake or slepe
Is redy aye, my body for to kepe

And yf that he may felen out of drede
That ye me touche or loue in vylonye
He right anon wyl slee you with the dede
And in your youthe thus shal ye dye
And yf that ye in clene loue me gye
He wol you loue as me, for your clennesse
And shewe you of hys ioye and brightnesse.

¶ This Valeryan corrected as god wolde
Answerde ayen, yf I shal trust the
Let me that aungel se, and hym beholde
And yf that it a very aungel be
Than wol I done as thou haste prayde me
And yf thou loue another man forsothe
Right wt this swerde thā wol I sle you both

¶ Cecyle answerde anon in this wyse
If that ye luste, that angel shul ye se
So that ye trowe on Christ and you baptyse
Gothe forthe to Via apia (q she)
That from this town ne stāt but myles thre
And to the poore folke that there dwel
Say hem right thus, as I shal you tel

Tel hem that I Cecyle, you to hem sende
To shewen you the good Vrban the olde
For secret nedes, and for good entent
And whan that ye sayne Vrban han beholde
Tel hym the wordes, that I to you tolde
And whā that he hath purged you fro synne
Than shal ye se that aungel er ye twynne.

Valeryan is to that place ygon
And right as him was taught by his lerning
He founde this holy Vrban anon
Amonge these sayntes buryals loutyng
And he anon, without taryeng
Dyd his message, and whan he had it tolde
Vrban for ioy, gan his hondes vp holde

The teres from his eyen let he fall
Almighty god, O Ihesu christ (q he)
Sower of chaste counsayle, hierde of vs al
The fruyte of thilke sede of chastyte
That thou haste sowe in Cecyle, take to the
Lo lyke a besy bee, without gyle
Che seruieth aye thyne owne thral Cecyle

For thylke spouse, that she toke but newe
Ful lyke a fierse lyon, she sendeth here
As meke as any lambe was to ewe
And with that worde, anon there gan apere
An olde man, cladde in whyte clothes clere
That had a boke with letters of gold in hōde
And gan byfore Valeryan for to stonde.

¶ Valeryan as deed fel downe for drede
Whan he this olde man sawe standyng so
Whiche forwith anon he herde him rede
O lorde, O faythe, O god without mo
Of chrystendom, and father of al also
Abouen al, and ouer al euery where
These wordes al with golde written were

Whā this was radde, thā sayd this olde mā
Leuest thou this thyng or none, say ye or nay
I leue al this thyng (q Valeryan)
Vnder the heuen no wight ne thynke may
Nother thyng than this, I dare wel say
Tho vanyshed the olde man, he nyst where
And pope Vrban hym chrystened right there

¶ Valeryan gothe home, & fyndeth Cecilye
Within his chambre, with an aungel stonde
This aungel had of rose and of lylye
Crownes two, the whiche he bare in honde
And first to Cecyle, as I vnderstonde
He yaue that one, and after gan he take
That other to Valeryan her make

With body clene, & vnwemmed thought
Kepeth aye wel these crownes (q he)
From paradyse to you I haue hem brought
Ne neuer more shullen rotten be

Me lest her swete sauour, smelleth me
Ne never wight shal seme hem with eye
But he be chaste, and hate vilonye

And thou Valeryan, for thou so sone
Allenerdest to good counsayle also
Say what ꝑ lyst, & thou shalt haue thy bone
I haue a brother (ꝙ Valeryan tho)
That in this world I loue no man so
I pray you that my brother may haue grace
To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place.

The angel answerd, god lyketh your request
And bothe with the palme of martyrdome
Shal ye come vnto the blisful feest
And with ꝑ word Tyburce his brother come
And whan that he the sauoure vndernome
Whiche that the roses and the lylyes caste
Within his herte he gan to wonder faste

¶ And sayd: I wōder this tyme of the yere
Whence that this sote sauoure cometh so
Of roses and lylyes, that I smel here
For though I had hem in myne hondes two
The sauour might in me no deper go
The swete smel, that in my herte I fynde
Hath chaunged me al in another kynde.

¶ Valeryan sayd, two crownes haue we
Snowe whyte & rose reed, that shyneth clere
Which that thyne eyen han no might to se
And as thou smellest hem thrugh my prayere
So shalt thou seen hem my leue brother dere
If it so be that thou wylte without slouthe
Leue a right, and knowe the very trouthe.

¶ Tyburce answerd, sayest thou this to me
In sothnesse, or in dreme herken I this
In dremes (ꝙ Valerian) han we be
Vnto this tyme, brother myne ywys
But nowe at erst, our dwelling in trouthe is
Nowe woll thou (quod Tyburce) & in what
wyse
Quod Valeryan, that I shal the deuyse.

The angel of god hath me ꝑ trouth taught
Which thou shalt seen, & thou wilt reney
Thy ydols, and be clene, and eke naught
And of the myracles of these crownes twey
Seynt Ambrose in his preface luste to sey
Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and sayth in this maneere.

¶ The palme of martyrdom for to wynne
Seynt Cecile, fulfylled of goddes yefte
The world & she her chambre gan she weyue
Witnesse Tyburce, and Cecyles shafte
To which god of his bounte wolde syfte
Crownes two, of floures wel smelling
And made the angel hē the Crownes bryng

The mayde hath brought hem to blisse aboue
The world hath wist what it is worth certes
Deuotion and chastyte wel for to loue
Tho shewed him Cecyle al open and playn
That al ydoles ben but thynges in vayne
For they ben domme, & therto they ben defe
And charged hym hys ydoles for to lefe

Who that trowerth not this, a beest he is
(Quod tho Tyburce) ꝑ that I shal not lye
She kyssed his brest whan she herde this
And was ful glad he couthe trouthe espye
This day take I the for myne allye
Sayd this blisful mayden fayre and dere
For after that she sayd as ye may here.

¶ Lo right so as the loue of Christ (ꝙ she)
Made me thy brothers wyfe, right in ꝑ wyse
Anon for myn aye here take I the
Fyrthes that thou wolte thyn ydoles dysfyse
Go with thy brother nowe, & the baptyse
And make the clene, so ꝑ thou mayst beholde
The angels face, of whiche thy brother tolde.

Tyburce answerd, and said brother dere
Fyrst tel me whyther I shal, & to what man
To whom he sayd, come forth ful good chere
I wol the lede vnto the pope Vrban
To Vrban brother myne Valeryan
(ꝙ this Tyburce) wylt thou me thyder lede
Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede

Ne meneth thou not Vrban (ꝙ he tho)
That is so ofte dampned to be deed
And wonneth in halkes to and fro
And dare not ones put forthe his heed
Men shulde him brenne in a fyre so reed
If he were founde, and men might hym fynde
And we alle, that here him companye

And whyles we seken thylke diuinite
That is yhidde in heuen priuely
Algate yblent in this worlde shulde we be
To whom Cecile answerde boldely

Ben

Men might drede wel and dyffully
This lyfe to lese, myne owne dere brother
If this were lyuing only and non other

But there is better lyuyng in other place
That neuer shal be loste, ne drede the nought
Which goddes sone vs told through his grace
That fathers sonne hath al thyng wrought
And al þ wrought is with a stedful thought
The goste that from the father gan procede
Hath soules hym without any drede

By worde and by myracle, Ie goddes sonne
When he was in this worlde, declared here
That there is other lyfe ther men may wone
To whom answerde Tyburce: O suffer dere
Me sayden thou right nowe in this manere
There nas but one god lord in sothfastnesse
And nowe of thre howe may þ here witnesse

¶ That shal I tel þe dere or that I go
Right as a man hath sapyences thre
Memorye, engyne, and intellecte also
Yet in suche beyng of vnyuite
The persons may there right wel be
Tho gan the there ful besily hym preche
Of Christes sonne, and of his paynes teche

And many poyntes of his passyon
Howe goddes sonne in thys worlde was
wythholde
To do mankynde playne remyssyon
That was bounde in synnes and cares colde
Al these thynges she vnto Tyburce tolde
And after this Tyburce in good entent
With Valeryan to pope Vrban went

That thonked god, and with glad hert and lighe
He christned hym, and made hym in that place
Perfyte in his lernyng goddes knyght
And after this Tiburce gate suche grace
That euery day he sawe in tyme and space
The aungel of god, and euery maner boone
That he god asked, it was sped ful soone

¶ It were ful harde by order for to sayne
How many wonders Iesu for him wrought
But at the laste, to tel shorte and playne
The sergeaunt of the towne hem sought
And hem byfore Almache þ prefost brought
Whiche hem apposed, and knewe al her entent
And to the ymage of Iupiter hem sent

And sayd, who so wol do no sacrifyce
Swappe of his heed, this is my sentẽce here
Anon these martyrs, that I you deuyse
One Varimus that was an officere
Of the prefectes, and his councelere
Hem hent, and whã he forth the sayntes ladde
Hym selfe he wept for pyte that he had

whan Varimus had herde this sayntes lore
He gate hem of the turmentours leue
And had hem to hys house withouten more
And with her preching, er that it were eue
They gonne from the turmentour reue
And from Varimus, and from hys folke echon
The false fayth, to trowen in god alone

¶ Cecyle came, whan it was worn nyght
With preestes, that hem christened al in fere
And afterward, whan day was worn light
Cecile hem sayd with a sober chere
Nowe Christes owne knyghtes leue and dere
Casteth al away the werkes of derkenesse
And armeth you in armoure of brightnesse

Ye han for sothe ydone a great batayle
Your cours is don, your fayth hath you con-
serued
Gothe to þ crowne of life that may not fayle
The rightful iudge, which ye han serued
Shal yeue it you as ye it deserued
And whan this thing was sayd, as I deuyse
Hem ladde hem forth to done the sacrifyse

But whã they were vnto the place ibrought
To tel shortly the conclusyoun
They nold ensence ne sacrifyce right nought
But on her knees, they saten hem adoun
With humble herte and sadde deuocioun
And losten bothe her heedes in the place
Her soules went to the kyng of grace.

¶ This Varimus, þ saw this thyng betyde
With pytouse teres tolde it anon right
That he her soules sawe to heuen glyde
With aungels ful of clerenesse and of lyght
And with his word conuerted many a wight
For which Almachius dyd hym so to bete
With whyppes of leede, tyl he his lyfe gã lete

Cecyle hym toke, and buryed hym anone
By Tyburce and Valeryan sothly
Within her buryeng place vnder a stone

And after this Almachius hastely
Bad hys mynisters fetchen openly
Cecily, so that she might in his presence
Do sacrifyce, and Jupiter encence

But they conuerted at her wyse lore
Wepten ful sore, and yaue ful credence
Unto her worde, and cryden more and more
Christ goddes sonne, without difference
Is very god, this is all our sentence
That hath a seruaunt so good him to serue
Thus who doyce we trow though we sterue

¶ Almachius, that herde al this doyng
Bad fetche Cecily, that he might her se
And alderfyrst this was his asking
what maner woman arte thou (q he)
I am a gentyl woman borne (q she)
I aske of the (q he) thought it the greue
Of thy religion and of thy byleue

¶ ye haue bygon your question folishly
(q she) that wolde two answers conclude
In one demaunde, ye asken leudly
Almachius answerde to that symilitude
Of whence cómeth thyn answere so rude
Of whence (q she) whá that she was frayned
Of conscience, and of good fayth vnfayned.

¶ Almachius sayd, ne takest thou none hede
Of my power: and she hym answerde thys
Your might (q she) ful lyte is to drede
For euery mortal mannes power nys
But lyke a bladder ful of wynde iwys
For with a nedels poynte, whan it is yblowe
Al may al the boste of it be layde ful lowe

Ful wrongfully beganste thou (q he)
And yet in wronge is thy perseueraunce
Woste thou not howe our mighty princes fre
Haue this cómaunded & made ordinaunce
That euery christen wight shal haue penaúce
But yf that he his cristendome withsty
And gon al quyte, yf he wol it reney.

¶ Your princes erren, as your nobles dothe
Quod tho Cecile, in a wode sentence
Ye make vs guilty, and it is not sothe
For ye that knowen wel our innocence
For as moche as we done a reuerence
To Christe, and for we bere a christen name
Ye put on vs a cryme and eke a blame

But we that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may is not withsty.
Almachius answerd, chese one of these two
Do sacrifyce, or christendom reney
That thou may stapen by that wey
At which worde the holy blisful mayde
Gan for to laught, & to the iuge she sayde.

¶ O iugge confused in thy nyeete
Wolte thou that I renye innocence
To make me a wycked wight (q she)
Lo he dissymuleth here in audience
He stareth and wodeth in his aduertence
To whom Almachius sayd: O sely wrech
Thou wost not how far me myst may streech

Hath not our mighteye princes yeuen
To me, bothe power and eke auctorite
To make folke to dyen or to lyuen
why spekest thou so proudely than to me
I ne speke it not but stedfastly (q she)
Not proudly for I say as for my syde
I hate deedly thilke vyce of pryde

And yf thou deede not a sothe for to here
Than wol I shewen al openly by right
That thou hast made a ful great leesyng here
Thou sayste thy princes han yeue the might
Both to slee and eke to quicke a wight
Thou ne mayest but only lyke byleue
Thou haste non other power ne leue

But thou mayst say, thy princes há ỹ maked
Mynistre of dethe for yf thou speke of me
Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked
Doway thy boldnesse, sayd Almachius the
And do sacrifyce to our goddes er thou go
I recke not what wronge thou me profer
For I can suffre, as can a philosopher

But thilke wronges may I not endure
That thou spekest of our goddes here (q he)
Cecile answerde, O nyce creature
Thou saydest no worde sythens thou spakest
to me
That I ne knewe therwith thy nyeete
And that thou were in euery maner wyse
A leude officer, and a vayne iustyce

The lacketh nothyng to thyne blere eyen
That thou nart blynd, for thing ỹ we seen al
That is a stone, that men may wel espyen

That

That ylke stone, a god thou wolte it cal
I rede the let thyn honde vpon it fal
And taste it wel, a stone thou shalte it fynde
Hens that thou ne ert not vp thyn eyen bi,nde

It is a shame that the people shal
Do scorne the, and laugh at thy folye
For comenly men wotte it wel ouer al
That mighty god is in his heuens hye
And these prouages, wel mayste thou aspye
To the ne to hem selfe may they not profyte
For in her effecte, they be not worthe a myte

¶ Thus and suche other wordes sayde she
And he wrote wrothe, a bad she shulde be lede
Home to her house, and in her house (q he)
Bienne her in a bathe, with flames rede
And as he bade, right so was done the dede
For in a bathe they gan her faste sheten
And myght a day great fyre vnder they beten

Al the longe night, and eke the day also
For al the fyre, and eke the bathes hete
She sate al colde, and dyde of it no wo
It made her not a droppe for to swete
But in that bathe her lyfe she mote lete
For Almachie, with a ful wicked entente
To deem her in the bathe, hys sonde sente

Thre strokes in the necke he smote her tho
The turmentour, but for no maner chaunce
He might not smyte al her necke a two
And for there was that tyme an ordynaunce
That no mā shuld do no person such penaunce
The fourth stroke to smyte, sore or sore
This turmentour durste smyte no more

But halfe deed, with her necke prouē there
He lette her lye, and on his way he went
The christen folke that aboute her were
With sheetes home ful fayre her hente
Thre dayes lyued she in this turmente
And neuer ceased she the faythe to teche
That she had fostred hem, she gan to preche

And hem she yaue her mouables & her thyng
And to the pope Vrban bytoke hem tho
And sayd, I aske this of the heuen kyng
To haue respyte thre dayes and no mo
To recōmaunde to you, er that I go
These soules, and that I might so werche
Here of myne house perpetuelly che a cherche

Saynt Vrban, with his dekens priuely
The body fette, and buryed it by night
Amonge his other sayntes honestly
Her house the churche of saynt Cecile hyght
Saynte Vrban halowed it, as he wel might
In which vnto this day in noble wyse
Wen don to Christ, & to his sayntes seruyce.

¶ Here endeth the seconde nonnes tale, and here begynneth the Prologue of the chanons yeman.

WHā ended was the lyfe of saynt Cecyle
Er we fully had rydden fyue myle
At Boughton vnder the blee, vs gan a take
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake
And vnder that he had a whyte surplyse
Hys hakeney, that was al pomely gryse
So swette, that it wonder was to se
It semed that he had pricked myles thre
The horse eke that his yoman rode vpon
So swette, that vnneth might he gon
Aboute the payrel stode the fome ful hye
He was of fome as flecked as a pye
A male twyfolde on his croper lay
It semed that he caryed lytel aray
Al lyght for sommer rode this worthy man
And in my herte wondren I began
What that he was, tyl I vnderstode
Howe that his cloke was sewed to his hode
For which, whan I had longe auysed me
I demyd him some chanon for to be
His hatte hynge at his backe by alace
For he had rydden more than trot or pace
He rode aye prickyng as he were wode
A clote lefe he had layde vnder hys hode
For swette, and for to kepe his heed fro hete
But it was ioye for to se hym swete
His forheed dropped, as a stillatorie
were ful of plantayne or of pelitorie
And whan he was come, he gan crye
God saue (q he) this ioly companye
Fayre haue I pryed (q he) for your sake
Because that I wolde you ouertake
To ryden in this merry company
¶ His yoman was eke ful of curtesye
And sayd syrs, nowe in the morowe tyde

Out of your hostery I sawe you ryde
And warned here my lorde and louerayne
Whiche that to ryden with you is ful fayne
For his disporte, he loueth daliaunce.
Fryde for thy warnig god yeue yt good chāce
Than sayd our host, certayne it wolde seme
Thy lorde were wyse, and so I may wel deme
He is ful ioconde also dare I lay
Can he ought tel a mery tale or tway
With which he glade may this compayne.
Who syr my lorde, ye without lye
He can of myrthe and eke of iolyte
Not but ynough also syr trusteth me
And ye hym knewe also wel as do I
Ye wolde wonder howe wel and thrifterly
He couthe werke, and that in sondrie wyse
He hath taken on him many a great empryse
Which were ful harde, for any that is here
To bring aboute, but they of him it lere
As homely as he ryderh amonge you
If ye him knewe, it wold ben for your prowe
Ye nolde not forgon his aquayntaunce
For mochel good I dare lay in balaunce
Al that I haue in my possessyon
He is a man of hye discrecyon
I warne you wel he is a passyng wyse man.
Wel (q our host) I pray the tel me than
Is he a clerke or non: tel what he is.
A clerke, nay he is greter than a clerke (iwys
Sayd the yoman, and in wordes fewe
Hoste of his crafte somwhat wol I shewe
I say my lorde can swiche a subtersite
But al his crafte ye may not wete of me
And somwhat helpe I yet to his worchyng
That al the grounde that we be on rydyng
Tyl we come to Caunterbury towne
He couthe al clene turne vp and downe
And paue it al of syluer and of golde.
And whan this yoman had thus ytolde
Unto our host: he sayd benedicite
This thyng is wonder merueylous to me
Seeing that thy lorde is of so hye prudence
(Bycause of which, men shuld hym reuerence)
That of his worshyp recketh he so lyte
His ouerest sloppe is not worthe a myte
As in effecte to hym, so mote I go
It is al bawdy and to tore also
Why is thy lorde so slouenyche I the pray
And is of power better clothes to bey.
If that his dede acorde with thy speche
Tel me that, and that I the beseche.
Why (q this yeman) wherto axe ye me
God helpe me so, for he shal neuer ythe
But I wot not anowe that I saye
And therfore kepe it secret I you praye
He is to wyse in fay, as I beleue
That is ouerdone nyl not preue
And right as clerkes sayne, it is a lyere
Wherfore I holde hym in that, leude & nyce
For whan a man hath ouer great a wytte
Ful ofte it happeth hym to mysusen it
So doethe my lorde, and that me greueth sore
God amende it, I can say you no more.
Therof no force good yeman (q our host)
Seens of the conuyng of thy lorde thou wost
Tel howe he dothe, I pray the heertely
Seens that he is so crafty and so sly
Where dwellen ye, yf it to tel be.
In the suburbes of a towne (q he)
Lurkyng in corners and in lanes blinde
Where thefe robbers, and theues by kynde
Holden her priuy fearful residence
As they that dare not shewen her presence
So fare we, yf that I shal say the soth.
Yet (q our host) let me talke tothe
Why arte thou so discoloured in thy face
Peter (q he) god yeue it harde grace
I am so vsed in the hoote fyre to blowe
That it hath chaūged my colour as I trowe
I am not wonte in no myrrour to prye
But swynke sore, and lerne to multiplye
We blondren euer, and pouren in the fyre
And for al that, we faylen of our desyre
For euer we lacken our conclusyon
To moche folke we do illusyon
And borowe golde, be it a pounde or two
Or ten or twelue, or many sommes mo
And make hem wene at the leste way
That of a pounde we coulde make tway
Yet is it fayle, and aye han we good hope
It for to done, and after it we grope
But that science is so fayre vs fro fyne
We nowe not, al though we had it vnoyne
It ouertake, it flytte away so fast
It wol vs make beggers at the laste.
Whyles this yeman was thus his talkyng
This chanon drewe him nere, & herd al thyng
Which this yeman spake, for suspection
Of mennes speche euer had this chanon
For Cato sayth, he that gylty is
Demeth al thing be spoke of hym iwys
Bycause of that, ge gan so nyghe to drawe
To his yeman, to herken al his sawe
And thus he sayd vnto his yeman tho

Holde

holde now thy peace, & speke no wordes mo
for yf thou do, thou shalt it sore abye
Thou slaunderest me here in thys companye
And eke dyscouerest ꝑ thou shuldest hyde.
Ye (ꝙ our host) tel on what so euer betyde.
Of al hys threatyng, recke I not a myte
Than sayth (ꝙ he) no more do I but lyte
And when thys chanon sawe it wolde not be
But hys yeman wolde tel hys priuite
He fled away for very sorowe and shame
Here (ꝙ the yeman) here shal ryse a game
Al that I can, anone wol I you tel
Sens he is gone, the foule fende hym quel
For neuer here after wol I wyth hym mete
For peny ne for pounde, I you behete
He that me brought fyrst vnto that game
Er that he dye, sorowe haue he and shame
For it is ernest to me by my fayth
That fele I wel, what so any man sayeth
And yet for al my smerte and al my grefe
For al my sorowe, labour and myschefe
I couth neuer leaue it in no wyse
Nowe wolde god my wytte myght suffyce
To tellen al that longeth to that arte
But nathelesse, yet wol I tel you a parte
Sens that my lord is gone, I wol not spare
Suche thynge as I knowe I wol declare.

Here endeth the prologue of the chanons yeman, and here followeth hys tale.



With thys chanon I dwelt seuen yere
And of hys science am I neuer the nere
All that I had, I haue lost therby
And god wote, so hath many mo then I
Here I was wonte to be eyght fresh & gay
Of clothynge, and eke of other good aray
Lowe may I weare an hose vpon my heed
And where my colour was both freshe & reed
Nowe it is wanne, and of a leden hewe
Who so it seeth, sore hym rewe
And of my swynke, yet bleered is myne eye
Lo wherych auauntage it is to multiplye
That slydynge science hath me made so bare
That I haue no good, where ꝑ euer I fare
And yet I am endetted so therby
Of golde, that I haue borowed trewly
That whyle I lyue, I shal it quyte neuer
Let euery man bewarre by me euer
What maner man that casteth hym therto
Yf he continue, I holde hys thryfte ydo
So helpe me god therby I shal he neuer wyn
But empeyre hys purse, & make his wittes thyn

And when he thynketh hys madnesse and folye
Hath lost hys owne good, through ieopardy
Then he exciteth other men thereto
To lese her good, as hym selfe hath do
For vnto shrewes, ioye it is and ese
To haue her felowes in payne and disese
For thus was I ones lerned of a clerke
Of ꝑ no charge, I wol speake of our werke
¶ when we be there, as we shal exercyse
Our clyrgh craft, we semen wonder wyse
Our termes ben so clergial and so quaynte
I blowe the fyre tyl myne herte faynte.
¶ what shulde I tel eche proporcion
Of thynges, whych we werchen vpon
As on fyue or fyre vnces, maye wel be
Of syluer, or of some other quantite
And besye me to tellen you the names
Of orpyment, brent bones, ylon squames
That into poudre grounden ben ful small
And in an erthen potte, howe put is all
And salt yput in, and also papere
Vylore these poudres that I speake of here
And wel ycouered wyth a lampe of glas
And of moche other thynge that there was
And of the pottes and glas englutynge
That of the ayre myght passe out no thynge
And of the esy fyre and smerte also
whych that was made, and of the care & wo
That we had in our matters sublymynge
And in amalgamyng, and calsenynge
Of quycksyluer, vclypped Mercurye crude
For al our sleyght, we conne not conclude
Our orpyment, and sublymed Mercurye
Our grounde Lytarge eke on the porphirye
Of eche of these, vnces a certayne
Not helpeth vs, our labour is in vayne
Ne eke our spirites assencioun
Ne yet our matters, that lyen al fyre adoun
Nowe in our werkynge nothynge auayle
For loste is al our labour & our trauayle
And al the coste, a twenty dyuel waye
Is loste also, wbych we vpon it laye.
¶ There is also ful many an other thynge
That is to our crafte apertaynynge
Though I by ordre hem ne rehearse can
Vnconnyng that I am a leude man
Yet wol I tellen hem, as they come to minde
Though I ne can sette hem in her kynde
As bole Armoyake, verdegrece, boras
And sondry vessels made of erth and glas
Our vrinals, and our dyestensoryes
Cucurbytes, and alembykes eke
And other suche, dere ynough a leke
It nedeth not to rehearse hem al
waters rubyfyeng, and boles gal
Arsenyke, sal armoniake, and brymstone
And herbes coulde I tel eke many one
As Egrimonye, valerian, and lunarye
And other suche, yf that me lyst to tarye
Our lampes brennyng both nyght and daye
To bryngé aboute our craft, yf that we maye
Our fourneyes eke of calcinacion
And of waters albifycation
Vnslaked lyme, chalke, and glayre of an eye
Poudres dyuers, asshes, donge, pysse, & clay
Gerred potettes, salt peter, and vytriole
And dyuers fyres, made of woode and cole
Sal tartre, alcaly, and sal preparate
And combust maters, and coagulate
Clay made wt horse duge, mans heere, & oyle
Of tartre alym, glas, berme, wozte, & argoile
Reysalgar, and other maters enbybynge
And eke of our maters encorporynge
And of our syluer cytrination
Our sementynge, and eke fermentacion
Our Ingottes testes, and many mo
I wol you tel as was me taught also
The foure spirites, and the bodyes seuen
By ordre, as ofte I herde my lorde nemene.
¶ The fyrst spirite quycke syluer cleped is
The seconde orpyment, the thyrde ryuys
Sal armonyake, the fourth brymstone
¶ The bodyes seuen eke, lo here hem anone
Sol golde is, and Luna syluer we clepe
Mars yron, Mercurye quyk syluer we clepe
Saturnus leede, and Jupiter is tynne
And Venus coper, by my fader kynne
¶ Thys cursed crafte, who so wol exercyse
He shal no good haue that may hym suffyse
For al the good he spendeth therabout
He lese shal, therof haue I no doute
who so that lysten to leren hys folye
Let hym come forth & lerne to multiplye
And euery man that hath aught in hys cofre
Let hym apere, and wexe a philosopher
Ywnnce that crafte is so lyght for to lere
Nay nay god wote, al be he monke or frere
Preest or chanon, or any other wyght
Though he syt at his boke both day & nyght
In lernynge of thys elvyshe nyce lore
Al is in bayne, and parde moche more
Is to lere a leude man thys subtelte
Fye speake not therof, it wol not be

A coulde he letture, or coulde he none
As in effecte, he shal fynde it al one
For both two, by my saluacion
Concluden in multiplicacion
Lyche wel, when they haue al ydo
Thys is to sayne, they sayden both two.
Yet forgate I moche rehersayle
Of waters corosyfe, and of lymayle
And of bodyes mollifycacion
And also of her induracion
Oyles, ablucions, metal fusyble
To tellen you al, wolde passe any byble
That o where is, wherfore as for the beste
Of al these names nowe wol I reste
For as I trowe, I haue you tolde ynowe
To fyfe a fende, al lobe he neuer so rowe.
¶ I nay let be the philosophers stone
Lurer cleped, we seken faste echeone
For had we hym, thé were we syker ynowe
But vnto god of heuen I make auowe
For al our crafte, when that we han al ydo
And al our sleyght, he wol not come vs to
He hath made vs spende moche good
For sorow of which, almost we wáre wood
But that good hope crepeth in our herte
Supposynge euer, though we sore smerte
To ben releued by hym afterwarde
Supposynge and hope is sharpe and harde
I warne you wel it is to syken euer
That lasture temps hath made men dyscreuer
In trust therof, all that euer they had
Yet of that arte, they couldé not ware sad
For vnto hym it is a bytter swete
So semed it, for ne had they but a shete
Which þ they myght wrappé thé in anyght
And a brarte to walken in the daye lyght
They wolden hem sel, & spéde it on this craft
They conne not stynte, tyl nothynge be laft
And euer more where that euer they gone
Men may hem ken by smel of brymstone
For al the worlde they stynken as a gote
Her sauour is so rammysh & so hote
That though a man a myle from hem be
The sauour wol enfecte hym trusteth me
Lo thus by smellyng, & by thred bare aray
Yf that men lyst, thys folke knowe they may
And yf a man wol aske hem prively
Why they be clothed so vnthryftely
Right anone they wol rowne in hys ere
And sayne, yf that they aspyed were
Men wolde hem slee, bycause of her science
Lo thus these folke bytrayen innocence

Passe ouer thys, I go my tale vnto.
¶ Er that the potte be on the fyre ydo
Of metalles, wyth a certayne quantyte
Wyl lorde hem tempreth, & no man but he
Nowe he is gone, I dare saye boldely
For as men sayne, he can do craftely
Algate I wotte wel he hath suche a name
And yet ful ofte he renneth in the blame
And woee ye howe, ful ofte it happeth so
The potte to bresteth, and farewel al is go
These metalles ben of so great violence
Our walles may not make hem resystence
But yf they were wrought of lime and stone
They percen so, & throughe the wal they gone
And some of hem synken in to the grounde
Thus haue we lost by tymes many a pounde
And some are statered al the flooze aboute
Some lepen into the rofe wythouten doute
Tho þ the fende not in our syght hym shewe
I trowe that he with vs be, that yke shrewe
In hel where that he is lorde and syre
Ne is there no more wo, ne angre ne yre
When that our potte is broke, as I haue sayd
Euery man chyte, & holte hym yuel apayde
Some sayd it was longe of the fyre makyng
Some sayd nay, it was on the blowyng
Then was I ferde, for that was myn office
¶ Strawe (q the thyrde) ye ben leude & nyce
It was not tempred as it ought to be
¶ Nay q the fourth) stynte & herken me
Bycause our fyre was not made of beche
That is the cause, and none other so theche
I can not tel wheron it is alonge
But wel I wote great stryfe is vs amonge.
what q my lord) ther nys no more to done
Of these perylles I wol beware efte sone
I am tyght syker, that the potte was crased
Be as be may, be ye not amased
As blage is, let swepe the flooze as swythe
Plucke vp your hert, and be glad and blythe.
The mullocke on an heape yswepte was
And on the flooze caste a canuas
And al thys mullokе in a syue ythrowe
And ysyfted and aplucked many a throwe.
Parde (q one) somwhat of our metall
Yet is there here, though we haue not all
And tho this thyng mishapped hath as nowe
In other tyme it may ben wel ynowe
we mote put our good in auenture
A marchaunt parde, maye not aye endure
Trusteth me wel in hys prosperite
Sometyme hys good is drowned in the see

And

And somtyme it cometh fals vnto the londe
Peace (q̄ my lord) ꝑ next tyme I wol fonde
To bynge our craft al in an other plyte
And but I do syn, let me haue the wyte
There was defaute in somwhat wel I wote
¶ An other sayd, the fyre was ouer hote
But be it hote or colde, I dare saye this
That we concluden euer more amys
we faylen of that whych we wolde haue
And in our madnesse euer more we raue
And when we be togethers euerychon
Euery man semeth as wyse as Salomon
But al thyng, whych that shyneth as ꝑ golde
Is not golde, as I haue herde tolde
Ne euery appel that is fayre at eye
Nys not good, what so men clappe or crye.
¶ Ryght so it fareth amonge vs
He that semeth the wysest by Jesus
Is moost foole, when it cometh to the preue
And he that semeth trewest is a theue
That shal ye know, er that I from you wende
By that I of my tale haue made an ende.
¶ There was a chanon of religioun
Amonges vs, wolde enfecte al a toun
Though it as great were as Auntue
Rome, Alysaundre, Troye, and other thre
Hys sleyght and hys infinite falsnesse
There couth no man wryten as I gesse
Though that he might lyue a thousand yere
In al thys worlde of falsnesse nys hys pere
For in hys termes he wol hym so wynde
And speake hys wordes in so slye a kynde
when he comen shal wyth any wyght
That he wol make hym dote anone ryght
But it a fende be as hym selfe is
Ful many a man hath he begyled er thys
And mo wol, ꝑ that he may lyue a whyle
And yet men ryden and gone ful many a myle
hym for to seke, and haue aquayntaunce
Not knowynge of hys false gouernaunce
And yf ye lust to gyue me audience
I wol it tellen here in your presence.
¶ But worshypful chanons religious
Ne demeth not that I sclaunder your house
Al though my tale of a chanon be
Of euery ordre some shrewe is parde
And god forbyd that al a companye
Shulde rue a syngler mannes folye
To slaunder you is not myne entente
But to correcte that myslle is mente
Thys tale was not only tolde for you
But eke for other mo, ye wote wel howe
That amonge Cristes apostles twelue
Ther was no traytour but Judas hym selue
Then why shulde the remnaūt haue blame
That gyltelesse were, by you I saye the same
Saue only thys, ꝑ ye wol herken me
ꝑ any Judas in your couent be
Remeueth hym betyme, I you rede
ꝑ shame or losse may causen any drede
And be nothynge displeased I you praye
But in thys case herkeneth what I saye.

In London was a preest annuellere
That therin had dwelt many a yere
whych was so pleasaunt and so seruysable
Vnto the wyfe, where he was at table
That she wolde suffre hym nothynge to pay
For bo[r]de ne clothyng, went he neuer so gay
And spendynge syluer had he ryght ynowe
Therof no force, I wol procede as nowe
And tel forth my tale of the chanon
That brought thys preest to confusyon.
¶ Thys false chanon came vpon a daye
Vnto thys preestes chambre, where he laye
Beseechynge hym to lene hym a certayne
Of golde, and he wolde quyte hym ayen
Lyeth me a marke (q̄ he) but dayes thre
And at my daye I wol quyte it the
And ꝑ it so be, that thou fynde me false
Another daye hange me by the halse
This preest toke hym a marke and that swyth
And thys chanon hym thanked ofte syth
And toke hys leaue, and went forth hys wey
And at thylke daye brought hys money
And to thys preest he toke thys golde ayen
wherof thys preest was glad and fayn
¶ Certes (q̄ he) nothynge anoyeth me
To lene a man a noble, two or three
Or what thynge were in my possession
when he so trewe is of condicion
That in no wyse he breke wol hys daye
To suche a man I can neuer saye naye.
what q̄ this chanon, shulde I be vntrewe
Nay, that were thynge fallen of newe
Trouth is a thynge that I wol euer kepe
Vnto the daye, in whych I shal crepe
Into my graue, or elis god forbede
Beleueth thys as syker as your crede
God thanke I, and in good tyme be it sayde
That there nas neuer man yet yuel apayde
For golde ne syluer that he to me lente
Ne neuer false in myne herte I ment.
And syr (q̄ he) nowe of my priuete

Sens

Hens ye so goodlyche haue ben to me
And kythe to me so great gentylnesse
Somwhat to quyte with your kyndenesse
I wol you shewe, yf ye wol it lere
(I shal it shewe to you anon right here)
Howe I can werche in philosophye
Taketh good hede, ye shal it se with your eye
That I wol doue a maistrye or I go.
(Ye syr (q the preest) and wol ye so
Herte therof I pray you hertely.
(At your comaundement ser truely
(q the chanon) and els god forbede
Lo howe this theefe couthe his servyce bede
Ful sothe is that suche profered servyse
Stynketh, as wytnesseth the olde wyse
And that ful sone I wol it verifye
In this chanon, rote of al trecherie
That euermore deuyse hath and gladnesse
Such fendely thoughtes in his hert enprysse
How christes people he may to mischefe bring
God kepe vs from his false dissymulyng.
(what wyst thys preest vp whom (p he delte
Ne of hys harme comyng nothyng he felte
O sely preest, O sely innocente
With couetyse anon thou shalte be blente
O graceles, ful blynde is thy conceyte
Nothyng arte thou ware of hys disceyte
Which that thy sore hath shapen to the
Thy wyfe wenches thou mayste not flee
Wherfore to go to the conclusyon
That referreth to thy confusyon
Vnhappy man, anon I wol me hye
To tel thyne vnwytte ne thy folye
And eke the falsnesse of that other wretche
As ferforthe as my conning wol stretche
(This chanon was my lord ye woldе wene
Of hoste in fayth, and by the heuen quene
It was another chanon, and not he
That can an hundred folde more subtelte
He hath betrayed folke many a tyme
Of his falsnesse it doleth me to tyme
Euer whan I speke of hys falsehed
For shame of hym, my chekes waxen red
Nigates they begynnen for to glowe
For rednesse haue I non, right wel I knowe
In my vysage, for fumes dyuerse
Of metals, whiche ye haue herde me reherse
Consumed and wasted hath my rednesse
Howe take hede of this chanons cursydnesse.
Syr (q he) to the preest, let your man gon
For quicksyluer, that we it had anon
And let hym bringe vnces two or thre
And whan he cometh, as faste shul ye se
A wonder thyng, which ye saw neuer er this
Syr (q the preest) it shal be done ywys
He badde his seruaunt fetch him this thyng
And he al redy was at hys byddyng
And went him forth, and came anon agayne
With this quicksyluer, shortly for to sayne
And toke these vnces thre to the chanoun
And he hem layde wel and fayre adoun
And bade the seruaunt coles for to bryng
That he anon might go to hys werkyng
(The coles right anon were yfet
And this chanon toke out a crosselet
Of his bosome, and shewed it to the preest
This instrument (q he) which that thou seest
Take in thy honde, and put thy selfe therin
Of this quicksyluer an vnce and begyn
In the name of Christ to werke a philosopher
There be ful fewe, whiche I wolde it profer
To shewe hem this mocke of my science
For here shul ye se by experience
That this quicksyluer I wol mortifye
Right in your syght anon withouten lye
And make it as good syluer and as fyne
As there is any in your purse or myne
Or els where, and make it malliable
And els holde me false and vnstable
Amonges folke euer to appere.
(I haue a poudre, that coste me dere
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al
My conning, which I you shewe shal
Voydeth your man, and let him be therout
And shette the doze, whyles we ben aboute
Our priuete, that no man vs espye
Whyles that we werken in our philosophye
Alas he bade, fulfylled was in dede
This yike seruaunt anon out yede
And hys maister shette the doze anon
And to her labour spedily they gon
This preest at this cursed chanons byddyng
Vpon the fyre anon set this thyng
And blewe the fyre, and besyed hym ful faste
And this chanon into this crosset caste
A pouder, I not wherof it was
Ymade, eyther of chalke, erthe, or glasse
Or somwhat els, was not worthe a flye
To blynde with this preest, and badde hym hye
These coles for to couchen al aboue
The crosselet, for in token that I the loue
(Quod this chanon) thyne hondes two
Shal werke al thyng that here shal be do.
Graunt mercy, q the preest, and was ful glad

And

And couched coles, as the chanon bad
And whyle he busy was, thys fedely wretch
Thys false chanon, the coule frende him fetch
Out of hys bosome toke a bechen cole
In whych ful subtelly was made an hole
And therin was put of syluer limayle
An vnce, and stopped was wythout fayle
The hole wyth ware, to kepe the limayle in
And vnderstandeth that thys false gyn
was not made there, but it was made before
And other thynges that I shal you tel more
Hereafter, whych that he wyth him brought
Er he came there, to begyle hym he thought
And so he dyd, er they wente a twynne
Tyl he had turned hym, could he not dynne
It dulleth me, when that I of hym speke
On hys falshede, fayne wolde I me wreke
yf I wyst howe, but he is here and there
He is so variaunt, he bydeth no where
But taketh hede syrs now for goddes loue
He toke hys cole, of whych I spake aboue
And in hys hande he bare it prively
And whyles the preest couched besely
The coles, as I tolde you er thys
Thys chanon sayd, frende ye done amys
Thys is not couched as it ought to be
But sone I shal amende it (q he)
Nowe let me medle therwyth but a whyle
For of you haue I pyte by sayntt Gyle
Ye ben ryght hotte, I se wel howe ye swete
Haue here a cloth and wype awaye the wete
And whyle the preest hym wyped hate
This chanon toke the cole, I shrewe his face
And layde it abouen vpon the mydwarde
Of the croslet, and blewe well afterwarde
Tyl that the coles gonne faste brenne
Nowe yeue vs drynke, q thys chanon then
As swyth al shall be wel I vndertake
Sytte we downe, and let vs mery make
And when thys chanons bechen cole
was brent al, the limayle out of the hole
Into the croslelette anone fel adoun
And so it muste nedes by resoun
Whens it so euen aboue couched was
But therof wyst the preest nothyuge, alas
He demed al the coles lyche goode
For of the sleyght, nothynge he vnderstode.
And whē thys alkamystre sawe his tyme
Ryseth vp syr preest (q he) & standeth by me
And for I wote wel yngot haue I none
Goth walketh forth, & brynge a chalke stone
For I wol make it of the same shappe
That an yngot is, yf I maye haue happe
And brynge eke wyth you a bolle or a panne
Ful of water, and ye shal se thanne
Howe that our busynesse shal happe & preue
And yet for ye shal haue no mysbeleue
Ne wronge conceyte of me in your absence
I wol not ben out of your presence
But go wyth you, & come wyth you agayne
The chambre doze, shortly to sayne
They opened & shette, & went forth her wey
And forth wyth hem they carryed the key
And comen ayen wythouten any delaye
what shulde I tarye al the longe daye
He toke the chalke, and shope it in the wyse
Of an yngot, as I shal you deuyse
I saye he toke out of hys owne sleue
A teyne of syluer, yuel mote he cheue
wyych that was but an vnce of weyght
And taketh hede nowe of hys cursed sleyght
He shope hys yngot, in lenght and in brede
Of the teyne, wythouten any drede
So slyly that the preest it not aspyde
And in hys sleue agayne he gan it hyde
And from the fyre toke vp hys matere
And in to the yngot it put wyth mery chere
And into the water vessel he it caste
when that hym lyst, & bad the preest as faste
Loke what ther is, put in thyn hāde & grope
Thou shalt fynde there syluer as I hope
what dyuel of hel shulde it els be
Shauynge of syluer, syluer is parde.
He put in hys hande, and toke vp a teyne
Of syluer fyne, and glade in euery vayne
was thys preest, when he sawe it was so
Goddes blyssynge and hys mothers also
And al hallowes, haue ye syr chanon
Sayd thys preest, and I her malyson
But and ye vouchsafe to teche me
Thys noble craft and thys subtelte
I wol be yours, in al that euer I may
q the Chanon, yet wol I make assay
The seconde tyme, that ye nowe take hede
And ben expert of thys, and in your nede
Another daye assay in myne absence
Thys dyscipline, and thys crafty science
Lette take another ounce (q he) tho
Of quycke syluer, wythouten wordes mo
And done therwyth, as I haue done er thys
wyth that other, whych that nowe syluer is.
Thys preest hym beseeth in al that he can
To done as thys Chanon, thys cursed man
Commaunded hym, and faste blewe the fyre
For

For to come to the effecte of his desyre
And this chanon, right in the meane while
Il rby was, this preest eke to begyle
And for a countenaunce in his honde bare
An holowe sticke, take kepe and be ware
In whiche sticke, as ye before honde
Herde me tel, he had a sylver teyne
A litle more than halfe a penny worth
Or elles lesse, and not aboue a ferth
In length, but it was holowe within
And in this holowe he had pyned a pin
Of silver fyne, and stopped with wex wele
For to kepen in his spyrite every dele
And whiles this preest was in his besynesse
This chanon with his sticke gan him dresse
To hym anon, and his poudre cast in
As he dyd erst, the devyl out of his skyn
Pluk toyne, I praye to god for his falsehede
For he was euer false in thought and dede
And with his sticke, aboue the crosselette
That was ordeyned with that false ielte
He stireth the coles, tyl al relent gan
The ware agayne the fyre, as every man
But he a fole be, wot wel it most nede
And al that in the hole was, out yede
And into the crosselet hastely it fel
The preest supposed nothyng but wel
But bysyed hym faste, & was wonder fayne
Supposyng nought but trouth, soth to sayn
He was so glad, that I can nat expresse
In no manere his myrthe and his gladnesse
And to the chanon he profered eftesone
Body and goode: ye (q the chanon) anone
Tho I be poore, craftly thou shalt me fynde
I warne the yet is there more behynde
Is there any coper here within sayd he
(Ye syr (q the preest) I trowe there by.
Clo go bye some, and that aswythe
Nowe good syr go forth thy way & hythe.
(He went his way, & with the coper he came
And this Chanon in his honde it name
And of that coper waved out but an vnce
Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce
Is to minystre of my wytte the doublenesse
Of this chanon, rote of al cursydnesse
He semed frendly, to hem that knew hym nought
But he was fendly, both in werke & thought
It werieth me to tel of his falsenesse
And natheleese, yet wol I it expresse
To the entent that men may beware therby
And for none other cause truely.
(He put this vnce of coper into the crosselet
And on the fyre as swythe he hath it sette
And cast in poudre, & made the preest to blowe
And in his working for to stoupe lowe
As he dyd erste, and al nas but a tape
Right as hym lyst, the preest he made his ape
And afterwarde in the ynget he it caste
And in the panne put it at the laste
Of water, and in he put his owne honde
And in his sleue, as ye before honde
Herde me tel, he had a sylver teyne
He slily toke it out, this cursed heyne
Unwetynge this preest of his false crafte
And in the pannes botome he hath it laste
And in the water rombleth to and fro
And wonder pruely toke vp also
The coper teyne, not knowynge this preest
And hyd it, and held hym by the brest
And to hym spake, & thus sayd in his game
Stoupeth adowne, by god ye be to blame
Helpeth me nowe, as I dyd you wylere
Put in your honde, and loketh what is there
(This preest toke vp this sylver teyne anon
And then sayd the chanon, let vs gon
With these thre teines, which we han wrought
To some goldsmyth, and wete yf it be aught
For by my fayth, I nolde for my hoode
But yf it were sylver fyne and good
And that as swyth proued shalbe.
(Unto the goldsmyth, with these teynes thre
They went, and put them in assaye
To fyre and hamer, might no man say naye
But they were as them ought for to be.
This sotted preest, who was gladder then he
Was neuer hyrde gladder ayenst the day
Ne nyghtyngale, ayenst the sesou of May
Was neuer none, that lyst better to synge
Ne lady lustyer in carolynge
And for to speake of loue and womanhede
Ne knyght in armes, to don a hardy dede
To standen in grace of his lady dere
Then had this preest, this craft to lere
And to the chanon, thus he spake, and sayd
For the loue of God, that for vs al deyd
And as I may deserue it vnto you
What shal this receit cost, telleth me nowe:
(By our lady (q this chanon) it is dere
I warne you wel, saue I and a frere
In Englande, there can no man it make.
No force (q he) nowe syr for goddes sake
What shall I paye, tel me I you praye.
Iwys (q he) it is ful dere I saye
Syr at one worde yf that ye lyst it haue
Ye shal pay fourty pounde, so god me saue
And here the frendshyp that ye dyd er this
To me, ye shulde paye more ywys.
(This preest the some of fourty pounde anone

Of nobles lette, and tolde hem euerychone
To thys chanon, for thys ylke reccyte
Al thys worchynge was fraude and lyfelyte
Thus preyd he hym, I kepe for to haue no loos
Of my crafte, for I wolde it were kept cloos
And as ye loue me, kepeth it feere
For and men knowe al my fubtelte
By god men wolde haue so great enuye
To me, bycause of my philosophye
I shulde be dede, there were none other way
God it forbyd (q the preest) what ye say
Yet had I leuer spende al the good
wbych that I haue, and elis were I wood
Then that ye shulde fallen in suche myschefe
For your good wyl haue ye eyght good preefe
(q the chanon) and fare wel gramt mercy
He went hys way, & neuer the preest hym sey
Vfter that day: & when that thys preest sholde
Vaken allay, at such tyme as he wolde
Of thys recepte, farewel it nolde not be
Lo thus betraped and begyled was he
Thus maketh he hys introduction
To bringe folke to her destruction.

Consydereth fyrs, howe in eche estate
Betwyxt men and golde is debate
So feruently, that vnnethes there is none
Thys moultiplyenge blyndeth so many one
That in good fayth, I trowe that it be
The greatest cause of suche scarsite
These philosophers speaken so mystely
In this craft, that men can not come therby
For any wytte that men haue now a dayes
They may wel chattre & tagle as do ꝑ tayes
And in her termes, set her lufte and payne
But to her purpose shul they neuer attayne
A man may lyghtly lerne, yf he haue ought
To multiplye, & bringe hys good to nought
Lo, suche a lucre is in thys lusty game
A mans myrth it wol turne al to grame
And emperen also great and heuy purses
And maken folke to purchase curses
Of hem that han alsò her good plente
O fye for shame, they that han be brente
Alas, can not they flye the fyres here
Ye that it rede, I rede that ye it lere
Lest ꝑ ye lesen al, for better the neuer is late
Neuer to thryue, were to longe a date
Though ꝑ ye prolle aye, ye shal it neuer fynd
Ye ben as bolde as is bayarde the blynd
That blyndereth forth, & peryl casteth he none
He is as bolde to renne ayenst a stone
As for to go besyde in the waye
So faren ye, that multiplyen I saye
Yf that your eyen can not sene aryght
Loketh that your wyndc lacke not his fyght
For though ye loke neuer so brode & stare
Ye shal not wynne a myte in that chaffare
But wast al that ye may rape and renne
wythdrawe the fyre, lefte it to fast brenne
Medleth wyth that arte no more I mene
For yf ye done, your thryfte is gone full clene
And ryght as swyth I wol you tellen here
what ꝑ the philosophers lafen in this matere
Lo thus sayeth Arnolde of the new town
As hys volarye maketh mencioun
He sayeth ryght thus, wythouten any lye
There may no man Mercurye mortifye
But yf it be wyth hys brothers knowleyng
Lo howe ꝑ he, wbych fyrst sayde thys tyrng
Of philosophers father was, Hermes
He sayeth howe the dragon doutles
Ne dyeth not, but yf he be slayne
wyth hys brother: And thys is for to sayne
By the dragon Mercurye, and none other
He vnderstode ꝑ brymstone was his brother
That out of Sol and Luna were ydrawe
And therfore sayd he, take hede to my sawe
Let no mã busye hym this arte for to lerne
But he that the entencion and speche
Of philosophers vnderstande can
And yf he do, he is a leude man
For thys science, and thys conning (q he)
Is of the secre of the secres parde.
Also there was a disciple of Plato
That on a tyme sayd hys mayster to
As hys boke Hermes wol bere wytnesse
And thys was hys demande in sothfastnesse
Tel me the name of the pieuy stone
And Plato answered vnto hym anone
Take the stone that Tytanos men name.
wbych is ꝑ (q he) Magnacia is the same
Sayd Plato: yea syr and is it thus:
Thys is ignotum per ignotius
what is Magnacia, good syr I you pray.
It is a watre that is made I say
Of elementes foure (quod Plato)
Tel me the roche good syr (q he tho)
Of that water, yf it be your wyl.
Nay nay (q Plato) certayne that I nyll
The philosophers were yswore ech one
That they shulde dyscouer it vnto none
Ne in no boke it wryte in no manere
For vnto Crist it is so lefe and dere
That he wol not that it dyscouered be

But

But where it lyketh to hys deite
Man to enspyre and eke for to defende
whan that hym lyketh, lo thys is his ende

Then conclude I thus, sens ỳ god of heue
Ne wyl not that the philosophers nemen
Howe that a mā shal come vnto thys stone
I rede as for the best, let it gone
For who so maketh god hys aduersarye
As for to werch any thynge in contrarye
Vnto hys wyl, certes neuer shal he thriue
Though that he multiplye terme of his lyue
And there a poynte, for ended is my tale
God sende euery true man bote of hys bale.

Here endeth the tale of the chanons yeman, and here folowyth the doctour of physykes prologue.

When thys yeman hys tale ended had
Of thys false chanon, whych was so bad
Our hoste gan saye, truely and certayne
Thys preest was begyled, sothe for to sayne
He wenynge for to be a philosopher
Tyl he right no golde lefte in hys coffer
And sothly thys preest had alther tape
Thys cursed chanon put in hys hode an ape
But al thys passe I ouer as now
Syr doctour of physyke, yet I pray you
Tel vs a tale of some honeste matere
It shalbe done, yf that ye wol it here
Sayd thys doctour, & hys tale began anone
Now good mē (q he) herkeneth euerychone.

Here endeth the doctour of physykes prologue, and here begynneth hys tale.



There was, as telleth vs Tytus Liuius
A knyght, that clypped was Virginius
Fulfylled of honour and of worthynesse
And stronge of frendes, and of rychesse
A doughter he had by hys wyfe
And neuer had he mo in al hys lyfe
Fayre was thys mayde in excellent beaute
Abouen euery wyght that man may se
For nature hath, wyth souerayne diligence
Formed her in so great excellence
As though she wolde say, lo I nature
Thus can I forme and paynt a creature
when that me lyste, who can me counterfete
Pigmalió not, though he alway forge & bete
Or graue or paynte, for I dare wel sayne
Appelles, or zeuxis, shulde werche in vayne
To graue or paynte, or forge or bete
yf they presumed me to counterfete
For he that is the former principall
Hath made me hys vycar generall

To fourme and paynte erthely creatures
Right as me lyste, for al thyng in my cure is
Under the moone, that may wane and ware
And for my werke, nothyng wol I are
My lorde and I ben fully of a corde
I made her to the worshyp of my lorde
So do I al myne other creatures
Of what colours they be, or of what figures
Thus semeth me that nature wolde say.
This mayd was of age twelue yere alway
In which that nature hath suche delyte
For right as she can paynte a lylye whyte
And rody as rose, right with suche paynture
She paynted hath this noble creature
Er she was borne, upon her lymmes fre
Were als bright as suche colours shulde be
And Phebus died had her tresses grete
Lyke to the stremes of his burned hete
And yf that excellent were her beaute
A thousande folde more vertuous was she
In her ne lacketh no condition
That is to preyse, as by discretion
As wel in body as in gost, chaste was she
For whiche she floured in virginite
With al humylyte and abstynence
With al attemperaunce and patience
With mesure eke, and berying of array
Discrete she was in answerying alway
Tho she were wyse as Pallas, dare I sayn
(Her faconde eke, ful womanly and playn)
No counterfayted termes had she
To seme wyse: but after her degree
She spake, and al her wordes more & lesse
Sowning in vertue and in gentylesse
Shamfast she was, & maydes shamfastnesse
Constant in hert, and euer in busynesse
To dryue her out of al slogardy
Bacchus had of her mouthe no maistry
For wyne and youth done Venus encrece
As men in fyre wol casten oyle or grece
And of her owne vertue vnconstrayned
She hath ful ofte her suche yfayned
For that she wolde flye the company
Where lyhely was to kreten of foly
As is at festes, at revels, and at daunces
That ben ycrafyens of dal yaunces
Swiche thynges maken chyldren for to be
To lone vyce and bolde, as men may se
Whiche is ful perillous, and hath ben poze
For al to lene may the leene loze
Of boldnesse, whan she is a wyfe.
And ye that stroules in your olde lyfe
That lordes doughters han in gouernaunce
Ne taketh of my worde no displesaunce
Thynke that ye ben set in gouernynges
Of lordes doughters, onely for two thynges
Eyther for ye han kepte your honestie
Eyther ye han fal in freelte
And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce
And conne forsake fully mischaunce
For euermore, therfore for Christes sake
Kepeth wel tho that ye vndertake.
A thefe of hymself that hath forlaft
His lyuerousnesse, and al his thewes craft
Can kepe a forest best of any man
Nowe kepeth hem wel, for yf ye wol ye can
Loketh wel, for no dred that ye assent
Lest ye be dampned for your yuel entent
For who so doth, a traytour is certayn
And taketh kepe of that I shal you sayn
Of al treyson souerayne pestilence
Is, whan a wight betrayeth innocence
Ye fathers, and eke ye mothers also
Though ye han chyldren, be it one or mo
Yours is the charge of al her suffisaunce
Whiles they ben in your gouernaunce
Beth ware, that by ensample of your lyuyng
Eyther by your negligence in chastisynge
That they ne perisshe: for I dare wel say
If that they don, ye shal ful sore obey
Vnder a shepeherde softe and negligent
The wolf hath many a shepe & lambe to rent
Suffyseth one ensample nowe as here
For I mote turne ayen to my matere.
This maid, of which I tel my tale expresse
She kepte her selue, she neded no maistresse
For in her lyuyng maydens myght rede
As in a boke, euery good worke and dede
That longeth to a mayde vertuous
She was so prudent and so bountuous
For whiche out sprange on euery syde
Both of her beaute and of her bounte wyde
That thorowe al the londe they preysed her echon
That loued vertue, saue enuy alone
That sorye is of other mennes weele
And gladde is of her sorowe, and vnhele
The doctour maketh this discription
This mayde went on a day into the toun
Towarde the temple, with her mother dere
As is of yonge maydens the manere.
Nowe was there a Justice in the toun
That gouernour was of that regioun
And so befyl, this Justice his eyen cast
Upon this mayde, auysyng her ful fast

Is he came forby, there as the Iuge stode
Anone hys herte chaungeth and hys mode
So was he caught with beaute of this mayde
And to hymselfe ful prively he sayde
This mayde shal a-be myne for any man
Anone the fende into hys herte ran
And caught hym sodeynly, by what sleyght
The mayde to his purpose wynne he myght
For certes, by no fayer, ne by no mede
Hym thought he was not able for to spede
For she was stronge of frendes, and eke she
Confyrmed was in such souerayne beaute
That wel he wyst he myght her neuer wyn
As for to make her wyth her body synne
For wherfor wyth great deliberacioun
He sent after a clyerk into the toun
The whych he knew ful sut yl & full bolde
This iuge vnto hys clerk his tale hath tolde
In secrete wyse, and made hym to ensure
He shulde t it vnto no creature
And yf he wold, he shulde lese hys hede
When assented was this cursed rede
Glad was the iuge, and made good chere
And yaue hym yiftes precious and dere
¶ When shapen was al this conspiracie
Fro poynt to poynt, howe that his lecherie
Parfourmed shulde be ful sut telly
As ye shullen after here openly
Home goeth this clyerk ye wyght Claudius
This false iuge, that wyght Appius
So was his name, for it is no fable
But knowe for an hystorial thynge notable
The sentence of it sothe is out of doute
This false iuge goeth nowe fast aboute
To haster his delyte, al that he maye
And so befell, that sone after on a daye
This false iuge, as telleth vs the storie
As he was wonte, sate in his consystorie
And yaue his domes vpon sondry caas
This false clerk came forth a ful gret paas
And sayd lorde, yf it be your wyll
As doth me ryght vpon this pytous bylle
In whych I playne vpon Virginius
And yf he wol say it is not thus
I wol proue it, and fynde good wytnesse
That soth is that my bylle wol expresse
The iuge answerde, of this in his absence
I may not yeue diffynytyf sentence
Let do hym come, and I wol gladly here
Thou shalt haue ryght, and no wronge here
Virginius came to wete the iuges wyl
And ryght anone was radde this cursed bylle
The sentence of it, was as ye shal here.
¶ To you my lorde Appius so dere
Sheweth your poore seruaunt Claudius
Howe that a knyght called Virginius
Ayenst the lawe, and ayenst al equite
Holdeth expresse ayenst the wyl of me
My seruaunt, whych is my thrale by ryght
Whych fro myne house was stole on a nyght
Whyles he was ful yonge, I wol it preue
By wytnesse lorde, so that ye you not greue
She is not his doughter, what so he saye
Wherfore my lorde iustyce I you praye
Yelde me my thrale, yf it be your wyll
Lo this was al the sentence of that bylle.
¶ Virginius gan vpon the clyerk beholde
But hastely, ere he his tale tolde
He wolde haue defended it, as shulde a knight
And by wytnesse of many a trewe wyght
That al was false, that sayd his aduersarye
This cursed iuge wolde no lenger tarye
Ne here a worde more of Virginius
But yaue his iudgement, and sayd thus.
¶ I deme anone this clerk his seruaunt haue
Thou shalt no leger her in thyne house saue
Go bringe her forth, & put her in our warde
This clerk shal haue his thral, thus I awarde
¶ And whe this worthy knyght Virginius
Through the assent of the iudge Appius
Must by force his dere doughter yeuen
Vnto the iudge in lechery to lyuen
He goeth hym home, and set hym in his hall
And let anone his dere doughter call
And wyth face deed as asshen colde
Vpon her humble face he gan beholde
With fathers pyte, stickyng through his herte
Al wolde he not from his purpose conuert.
¶ Doughter (q he) Virginia by thy name
There ben two wayes, eyther deth or shame
That thou must suffre, alas ỳ I was borne
For neuer thou deseruedest wherfore
To dyen, wyth a swerde or wyth a knyfe
O dere doughter, comforte of my lyfe
Whych I haue fostred vp wyth such plesaunce
That thou ne were out of my remembraunce
O doughter, whych that arte my last wo
And in my lyfe my last ioye also
O gemme of chastite in patience
Take thou thy death, this is my sentence
For loue, and not for hate thou must be deed
My pytous hande mote smyte of thyne heed
Alas that euer Appius the sey
Thus hath he falsly iudged the to dey

And tolde her al the caſe, as ye before
Han herde, it nedeth not to tel it more
(O mercy dere father (q thys mayde)
And wyth that worde, both her armes layde
Vpon hys necke, as she was wont to do
The teeres braste out of her eyen two
And sayd, O good father shal I dye
Is there no grace, is there no remedye
(No certes dere doughter myne (q he)
Then yeue me leaue father myne (q she)
My death to complayne a lytel space
For pardé, I ette yaue hys doughter grace
For to complayne, er he her slough, alas
And god it wote, nothynge was her trespas
But that she ranne her father fyrst to se
To welcome hym wyth great solempnyte
And with that word she fel a swoune anone
And after, when her swounynge was gone
She ryseth vp, and to her father sayd
Blyssed be god that I shal dye a mayde
Yeue me my death, er that I haue a shame
Doth vp your child your wil a goddes name
And wyth ꝑ worde, she prayeth hym ful ofte
That vp his swerd he should smitte her softe
And with that word, a swoune down she fel
Her father, wyth sorowfull herte and fell
Her heed of smote, and by the toppe it hente
And to the iudge he it yaue in presente
As he sate in dome in consystorye.

when the iudge it sawe as sayth the storye
He bade take hym, and hange hym also faste
But ryght anone al the people in thraste
To saue the knyght, for routh and for pyte
For knowen was the iudges iniquite
The people anone had suspect in this thing
By maner of thys clerkes chalengynge
That it was by the assent of Appius
They wyste wel that he was lecherous
For wyche vnto Appius they gone
And casten hym in prison ryght anone
where as he slowe hym selfe, and Claudius
That seruaunt was vnto thys Appius
was demed for to be hanged vpon a tre
But Virginius, of hys great pyte
So prayed for hym, that he was exiled
And elis certes he had ben begyled
The remnaunt were hanged, more and lesse
That consented were to thys cursydnesse
Here may men se how syn hath hys meryte
Beware, for no mā wot how god wyl smyte
In no degre, ne in no maner wyse
The worme of conscience wol aryse
Of wyched lyfe, though it ſo pryuy be
That no man wote of it but god and he
whether he be leude man or lered
He not howe sone he may be afered
Therfore I rede you thys counsayle take
Forsake synne, or synne you forsake

Here endeth the doctour of Phi-sykes tale, and folowyth the wordes of the hoost.

Our hoste gan swere as he were woode
Harowe (q he) by nayles and by bloode
Thys was a falſe theſe, and a cursed iustyce
As shameful death, as herte may deuyse
Come to the iustyce and her aduocas
Algate thys sely mayden is slayne, alas
Alas to dere bought she her beaute
wherfore I saye, that al men maye se
That yeftes of fortune, or of nature
Ben cause of death of many a creature
Her beaute was her death, I dare wel sayne
Alas so pytously as she was slayne
But here of wol I not procede as nowe
Ben haue ful ofte more harme then prowe
But truely myne owne mayster dere
Thys is a pytous tale for to here
But natheleſſe, passe ouer is no force
I pray to god to saue thy gentyl cors
And thy vrinalles, and thy tordanes
Thyne ypocras, and eke thy galyanes
And euery bore ful of lectuarye
God blesse hem and our lady saynt Marye
So mote I the, thou arte a propre man
And lyke a prelate, by saynt Ronian
Saue that I can not speake wel in termē
But wel I wote, ꝑ doest myn herte to yerne
That I haue almoſt caught a cardiacle
By corpus domini, but I haue tryacle
Or elis a draught of moyste corny ale
Or but I here anone an other merry tale
My herte is lost, for pyte of thys mayde
Thou belamy, thou Johan pardoner he sayd
Tel vs some mery tale, or iape, ryght anone.

It shalbe done (q he) by saynt Ronyon
But fyrst (q he) here at thys ale stake
I wol both drynke, and eate of a cake
But ryght anone, these gentyls gan to crye

Nay

Nay, let hym tel vs of no rebaudrye
Tel vs some mozal thing, that we mow lere
Some wytte, and than wol we gladly here
I graunt (q he) wys, but I mote thynke
On some honest thyng, whyles ꝑ I drynke.

Here ende the wordes of the host, and here folowyth the prologue of the Pardoner.



Ordynges (q he) in chyrche
whan I preche
I payne me to haue an hau-
teyn speche
And ryng it out, as rounde as
doothe a bel
For I can al be roote, that I tel
My terme is alwaye, and euer was
(Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas)
First I pronounce fro whens I come
And than my bylles I shewe al and some
Our liege lordes seale on my patent
That shewe I first, my body to warent
That no man be so bolde, preest ne clerke
Me to disturbe of Christes holy werke
And after that, tel I forthe my tales
Bulles of Popes, and of Cardynales
Of Patriarkes, and of Bysshoppes I shewe
And in latyn I speke wordes a fewe
To saueur with my predicacion
And for to steere men to deuocion
Than shewe I forth my long cristal stones
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones
Reliques they ben, as wene they echone
Than haue I in laton a shoulderbone
Whiche that was of an holy iewes shepe
Good men saye I, take of my wordes kepe
If that this bone be washen in any wel
If cowe or calfe, shepe, or ox swel
That any wourme hath eeten, or worm stonge
Take water of this wel, and washe his tong
And it is hole anon: and furthermore
Of pockes, and of scabbes, and euery sore
Shal shepe be hole, that of this wel
Drynketh a draught, take kepe of that I tel
If the good man that the beestes oweth
Wol euery day, ere the cocke croweth
Fastyng drynke of this wel a draught
As thilke holy iewe our eldres taught
His beestes and his store shal multiplye
And sykes, also it healeth ielousye
For though a man be fal in ielous rage
Let make with this water his potage
And neuer shal he more his wyfe mistryst
Though he in sothe the defaute by her wyst
Al had she taken preestes two or thre.
Here is a mytayne eke, that ye may se
He that his honde wol put in this mitayne
He shal haue multiplyeng of his grayne
Whan he hath sowen, be it whete or otes
So that he offer good pens or grotes
And men & women, o thyng I warne you
If any wight ben in this churche nowe
That hath done synne horrible, that he
Dare not for shame of it shriuen be
Or any woman, be she yonge or olde
That hath made her husbonde cokewolde
Suche folke shul haue no powre ne no grace
To offre to my reliques in this place
And who so fyndeth hym out of suche blame
Commeth vp and offre in goddes name
And I assoyle hym by the auctorite
Suche as by bulle was graunted to me.
By this gaude haue I wonne euery yere
An hundred marke, sythen I was pardonere
I stonde lyke a clerke in my pulpet
And the leude people byn downe yset
I preche so as ye haue herd here before
And tel an hundred tapes more
Than payn I me to stretche forth my necke
And este and west, vpon the people I becke
As doothe a doue, sytting vpon a berne
My hondes and my tonge gon ful yerne
That it is ioy to se my besynesse
Of auarice, and of suche cursydnesse
Al my prechyng is for to maken hem free
To yeuen her pens, and namely vnto me
For myne entent is not but for to wynne
And nothyng for correction of synne
I recke neuer, whan that they ben beryed
Thoughe her soules gon a blacburyed
For certes many a predycacion
Cometh oft tyme of yuel entencion.
Some for pleasaunce of folke, & for flatery
To ben auaunced by hipocrysy
And some for veyne glorie, and some for hate
For whan I dare not other wayes debate
Than wol I sting hem with my tonge smerte
In prechyng, so that he shal not asterte
To ben diffamed falsly, yf that he
Hath trespased to my brotherne or to me

For though I tel nat his propre name
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
By signes, or by other circumstances
Thus quyte I folke, that doon us displesances
Thus put I out my venym under hewe
Of holynesse, to semen holy and trewe
But shortly myne entente I wol devyse
I preche of nothyng but of coveityse
Therfore my theme is yet, and ever was
Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas.
¶ Thus can I preache ayenst the same vyce
Which that I vse, and that is avarice
But though myself be gilty in that synne
Yet can I maken other folke to twynne
From avarice, and sore hem to repent
But that is not my principal entente
I preche nothyng but for coveityse
Of this matere, it ought ynough suffyse.
Than tel I hem ensamples many one
Of olde stories, longe tyme agone
For lewde people loven tales olde
Which thynges they can wel reporte & holde
What trow ye whiles that I may preche
And wynne golde and syluer for to teche
That I wol lyve in povert wilfully
Nay nay, I thought it never trewly
For I wol preche and begge in sondry londes
I wol not do no labour with myn hondes
Ne make baskettes, and lyve thereby
Bycause I wol not begge idelly
I wol none of the apostles counterfete
I wol have money, mault, chese, & whete
Al were it yeven of the poorest page
Or of the poorest wydowe in a village
Though her children shuld sterve for famyne
Nay, I wol drinke the lycoure of the vyne
And have a ioly wenche in every toun
But herkeneth lordynges my conclusioun
Your lykyng is that I shulde tel a tale
Nowe I have dronken a draught of corny ale
By god I hope I shal tel you a thynge
That shal by reson ben at your lykynge
For though myself be a ful vycious man
A moral tale yet I you tel can
Which I am wonte to preche, for to wynne
Nowe holdeth your peace, my tale I wol begynne.

¶ Here endeth the Pardoners prologue, and here foloweth his tale.



In Flan

IN Flaunders whilom ther was a company
Of yonge folke, that haũted folly
As hasarde, ryotte, stewes, & tauernes
Where as wyth harpes Lutes, and Getternes
They dawnsen & playen at dyce nyght & day
And eten also, ouer that her myght may
Through which they don the deuel sacrifyce
within the deuels temple, in cursed wyse
By superfluite abhominable
Her othes ben so great and so damnable
That it is grisly for to here hem swere
Our blessed lordes body they al to tere
Hem thought iewes rent him not ynough
And eche of hem at others synne lough.
And right anon comen in tombesteres
Fetys and smale and yonge fruytesteres
Syngers with harpes, baudes, & wafereres
Whiche that ben verely the deuels officers
To kyndlen and blowe the fyre of lechery
That is anexed vnto glotony
The holy writte take I to my witnesse
That lechery is in wyne and dronkennesse.
Lo howe that dronken Lothe vnkyndly
Lay by his doughters two vnwetyngly
So dronke he was, he nist what he wrought
And therfore sore repent hym ought
Herodes, who so wol the storyes seche
There may ye lerne, & by ensample teche
what he of wyne was replete at his feste
Right at his owne table, yaue his heste
To sleen Johan the Baptiste ful guiltiesse
Seneke sayth eke good wordes douteiesse
He sayth he can no difference fynde
Betwixt a man that is out of his mynde
And a man that is dronkelewe
But woodnesse that is fallen in a shrewe
Perseuereth lenger than doth dronkennesse
O glotony ful of cursydnesse
O cause fyrst of our confusyon
O original of our dampnacion
Tyl Christ had bought vs wt his blode agayn
Lo howe dere, shortly for to sayn
Bought was fyrst this cursed vilanye
Corrupt was al this world through glotony
Adam our fodr father, and his wyfe also
Fro Paradyce, to labour and to wo
Were driuen for that vyce, it is no drede
For whyles that Adam fasted, as I rede
He was in paradyce, and whan that he
Ete of the frute, defended on the tre
Anon he was out caste to wo and payne
O glotony, on the wel ought vs to playne.
¶ Oh, wyste a man howe many maladyes
Foloweth of excesse and of glotonyes
He wolde ben the more mesurable
Of his dyete, sytting at his table
Alas the shorte throte, the tender mouthe
Maketh that est, & west, north, and south,
In erthe, in eyre, in water, man to swynke
To getten a gloton daintye mete and dronke
Of this mater, o Poule wel canste thou trete
Mete vnto wombe, & wombe eke vnto mete
Shal god destroy bothe as Poule sayth
Alas, a foule thyng it is by my fayth
To say this worde, and fouler is the dede
whan men so drunketh of the wyne & rede
That of his trothe he maketh his praue
Through thilke cursed superfluite.
¶ The apostle sayth, wepyng ful pitously
There walken many, of which tolde haue I
I say it nowe wepyng with pitous voyce
There ben enemyes of Christes croyse
Of which ye ende is deth, wombe is her god
O belly, O wombe, O stynkyng cod
Fulfylled of donge and of corruptioun
At eyther ende of the foule is the soun
Howe great coste and labour is to fynde
These cokes how they stampe, stram, & grinde
And turne substaunce in to accident
To fulfyl al thy lycherous talent
Out of the harde bones knocken they
The mary, for they caste it not awey
That may go through the gullet soft & soote
Of spycerie, of leues, barke, and roote
Shal ben his sauce ymade by delyte
To maken hym haue a newer apetyte
But certes he that haunteth suche delytes
Is deed, whiles that he lyueth in the vyces
¶ A lecherous thyng is wyne and dronkennesse
It is ful of stryuyng and of wretchydnesse
O dronken man, disfygured is thy face
Sower is thy breth, foul art thou to embrace
And through thy dronke nose soundeth ye soun
As tho thou saydest ay Sampson Sampson
And yet god wote Sampson dronk neuer wyne
Thou fallest, as it were a stycked swyne
Thy tonge is lost, and al thyne honest cure
For dronkennesse is very sepulture
Of mannes wytte, and his discretion
In whom that dronke hath dominacion
He can

He can no counsayle kepe, it is no drede
Nowe kepe you fro the wyntye and fro ꝑ rede
Namely fro the white wyne of Lepe
That is to sel in Fisshe stretе and in Chepe
This wyne of Spayne crepeth subtelly
In other wynes growyng faste by
Of whiche ryseth swiche fumositee
That whan a mã hath dronke draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe
He is in Spayne, right at the towne of Lepe
Nought at Rochel, ne at Burdeux toun
And thanne wol he say, Sampsoun Sampsoun
But herkeneth lordinges o word, I you pray
That al the souereyne actes, dare I say
Of victories in the olde Testament
That thorowe very god, that is omnipotent
Were don in abstinence and in prayere
Loketh the Bible, and there ye may it lere.
Loketh Attyla, the great conquerour
Deyd in his slepe, with shame and dishonour
Bledyng aye at his nose in dronkenesse
A capitayne shulde lyue in sobernesse.
And ouer al this, auyse you right wel
What was comaunded vnto Lamuel:
Nat Samuel: but Lamuel saye I
Redeth the Bible, and fynden it expresly
Of wyne yeuyng to hem that haue iustyce
No more of this, for it may ynoughe suffyce.

And nowe that I haue spoke of glotenye
Nowe wol I defende you hasardrye
Hasarde is very mother of lesynges
And of disceyte, and cursed foryswerynges
Blaspheme of crist, mãslaughter, & wast also
Of catayle ofte tyme, and of other mo
It is reprefe, and contrarye to honour
For to be holden a comen hasardour
And euer the hyer that he is of estate
The more he is holden desolate
If that a prince vse hasardrye
In al gouernaunce and policie
He is as by comen opinyon
Holde the lesse in reputacion. (sadour
Stylbon, that was holde a wyse ambas-
was sent in to Corinthe vp ful great honour
Fro Calydone, to maken hem alyaunce
And whan he came, happed this chaunce
That al the greatest that were of that londe
Playeng at hasarde he hem fonde
For whiche, as sone as it might be
He stale hym home ayen to his countre
And sayd, there wol I not lese my name
I nyl not take on me so great defame
For to alye you to none hasardours
Sendeth other wyse embassadours
For by my trouthe, me were leuer dye
Than I shulde you to hasardours alye
For ye that ben so glorious in honours
Shal not alye you with hasardours
As by my wyl, ne by my treste
This wyse philosopher, thus sayd he.
Loke eke howe to kyng Demetrius
The kyng of Parthes, as the boke sayth hus
Sent hym a payre of dyce of golde in scorne
For he had vsed hasardrye there byfore
For which he helde his glorie & his renoun
At no value or reputacioun
Lordes might fynde other maner play
Honest ynough to drive the day away.

Nowe wol I speke of othes false & grete
I wolde or two, as other bokes entreat
Great swerying is thyng al horrible
And false swerying is yet more reprouable
The hye god forbade swerying at all
Witnesse of Mathew, but in speyall
Of swerying sayth the holy Jeromye
Thou shalte swere soth thyn othes, & not lye
And swere in dome and eke in rightwysnesse
But vdle swerying is a cursednesse.
Beholde and se that in the first table
Of hye goddes hestes honorable
Howe that the seconde heste of hym is this
Take not my name in vdelnesse amys
Lo, he ratherr forbyddeth such swerying
Than homicide, or any other cursed thyng
I say as thus, by order it stondeth (deth
This knowen they ꝑ his hestes vnderstonde
Howe that the seconde heste of god is that
And further more, I wol the tel al plat
That vengeaunce shal not parte fro his hous
That of his othes is to outrageous
By goddes precious herte, and his bones
And by the blode of Crist, shed for vs ones
Seuen is my chaunce, and thyn fyue & twa
By goddes armes, yf thou falsly play me
This dagger shal thorowe thyn herte go
This fruite cometh of thyrlie bones two
For swering, ire, falsnesse, and homycyde
Now for ꝑ loue of Crist, that for vs dyde
Leueth your othes, bothe great and smale
For I shal tel you a meruaylous tale.
These ryottours thre, of which I tel
Longe erste or prime rong any bel

were

were set hem in a tauerne to drinke
And as they sate, they herde a bel clynke
Before a corse, ꝑ was caryed to his graue
That one of hem gan cal to his knaue
Go bette (ꝙ he) and aske redely
what corse is this, that passeth forthe by
And loke that thou reporte his name wele.
¶ Syr (ꝙ he) it nedeth neuer a dele
It was me told er ye came here two houres
He was parde an olde felowe of yours
And suddaynly was he slayne to nyght
Fordronke as he sate on his benche vpright
There came a preuy theefe, men clepen dethe
That in this countrey al the people slethe
And with his spere he smote his herte a two
And went his way, withouten wordes mo
He hath a thousande slayne, this pestilence
And maysters, er ye come in his presence
Me thynketh that it were necessarye
For to beware of suche an aduersarye
Beth redy for to meten hym euer more
Thus taught me my dame, I say no more.
¶ By sayntꝰ Marry, sayd this tauerner
The childe sayth sothe, for he hath this yere
Been ouer a myle, slayne in a great village
Both man and woman, childe and page
I trowe his habytacion be there
To ben auysed, great wysedome it were
Er that he dyd a man dishonour.
¶ Yea goddes armes (ꝙ this ryottour)
Is it suche peril with hym for to meete
I shal hym seeke by stile & eke by streete
I make a vowe, by goddes digne bones
Herkeneth felowes, we thre ben al ones
Let eche of vs holde vp his honde to other
And eche of vs become others brother
And we wol slee this false traytour dethe
He shal be slayne, that so many slethe
By goddes dignitie, er that it be nyght
¶ To gider han these thre her trouthes plight
To lyue and dye eche of hym with other
As though he were his owne brother
And vp they sterten al dronken in this rage
And forthe they gone, towarde that village
Of which the tauerner hath spoke before
And many a grisly othe han they sworne
And Cristes blessed body they to rente
Dethe shal be deed, and we may hym hente.
¶ whan they han gone not fully a myle
Right as they wold haue troden ouer a stile
An olde poore man with hem mette
This olde man ful mekely hem grette
And sayd, nowe lordynges god you se.
¶ The proudest of these ryottours thre
Answerde ayen, what chorle with harde grace
why art thou al forwrapped saue thy face
why lyuest thou so longe in so great age
¶ This olde man gan loken in hys vilage
And sayd thus: for I can not fynde
A man, though I walked into Inde
Neyther in cyte, ne in no village
That wol chaunge his youthe for myne age
And therfore mote I haue myn age styl
As longe tyme as it is goddes wyl.
Ne dethe alas, nyl not haue my lyfe
Thus walke I lyke a restlesse caityfe
And on ꝑ ground, which is my mothers gate
I knocke with my staffe crychyng and late
And say, leue mother let me in
Lo howe I vanyshe, flesshe, bloode, & skyn
Alas, whan shal my bones ben at reste
Mother with you wolde I chaunge my cheste
That in my chamber longe tyme hath be
Ye for an heren cloute to wrappe in me
But yet to me she wol not done that grace
For whiche ful welked is my face
But syrs, to you it is no curtesye
To speken vnto an olde man vilanye
But he trespace in worde eyther in dede
In holy writte, ye may your selfe wel rede
Ayenst an olde man, hoore vpon his heede
Ye shulde aryse, therfore I you rede
Ne doth vnto an old man no harme as now
No more than ye wolde a man dyd you
In age, yf that I may so longe abyde
And god be with you, whether ye go or ryde
I mote go thyder as I haue to go
¶ Nay olde chorle, by god thou shalt not so
Sayd these other hasardours anon
Thou partest not so lightly by sayntꝰ John
Thou spakest right now of thilke traytor dethe
That in this countre al our frendes slethe
Haue here my trouthe thou arte his espye
Tel where he is, or els thou shalt dye
By god and by the holy sacrament
For sothely thou arte of hys assent
To slee vs yonge folke, thou falce theefe.
¶ Nowe syrs, yf it be to you so leefe
To fynde dethe, turne vp this croked way
For in that grove I lefte hym by my fay
Under a tree, and there he wol abyde
Ne for your boste he nyl hym nothyng hyde
See ye yonder oke, right there ye shal hym fynde
God saue you, that bought agen mankynde

And you

And you amende, thus seyd this olde man
¶ Than eueryche of these ryottours ran
Tyl they came to the tree, & there they founde
Florevnes of golde fyne, ycoyned rounde
wel nye a seuen bushels, as hem thought
No lenger than after dethe they sought
But eche of hem so glad was of that syght
For that the Florevns so fayre ben & bright
That downe they sytte, by the precious hord
The worst of hem spake the fyrst word.
¶ Brethern (q he) take kepe what I say
My wytte is great, though I borde & play
This tresure hath fortune to vs yeuen
In myrthe and iolyte our lyfe to lyuen
And lightly as it cõeth, so wol we spende
Hey, goddes precious herte: who wende
To day, that we shulde haue so fayr a grace
But might this gold be caryed fro this place
Home to my house, or elis to yours
(For wel I wote that al this golde is ours)
Than were we in hye felycite
But trewly by day it may not be
Men wolde say, that we were theues stronge
And for our owne tresoure than vs honge
This tresour muste ycaried be by nyght
As wisely and as slily as it might
Wherfore I rede, let loke amonge vs al
To drawe, & let se where the cutte wol fal
He that hath & shortest cutte, with herte blyth
Shal renne to towne, and that ful swythe
To bring vs breed & drinke ful prively
And two of vs shal kepe ful subtelly
This tresour wel, and yf he wol not tarye
Whan it is night, we wol this tresour carye
By one assent, where as vs lyste best
That one of hem brought grasse in his fest
And bad hẽ draw, & loke on whõ it wold fal
And it fel on the yongest of hem al
And forth towarde the towne he went anon
And al so sone as he was gone
That one of hem spake vnto that other
Thou wost wel, thou art my sworn brother
Thy profyte wol I tel the right anone
Thou woste wel that our felowe is gone
And here is golde, and that ful great plente
That shal departed be amonge vs thre
But nathelesse, yf that I can shape it so
That it departed were amonge vs two
Had I not done a frendly turne to the
That other answerd, I not how & might be
I wol wel that the golde were ours two
What shulde we do, that it might be so
¶ Shal it be cõseyle (said the fyrst threwe)
And I shal tel the in wordes fewe
what we wol done, and bryng it wel aboute.
I graunt (q that other) out of doute
That by my trouth, I wol & not bewrayen
¶ Now (q he) thou wost wel we ben twayne
And twayne of vs shal stronger be than one
Loke whan he is sette, and than anone
Aryse, as though thou woldest ẽ hym play
And I shal ryuen him thrugh & sydes tway
whyles & thou strugglest ẽ hym as in game
And with thy dagger, loke thou do the same
And than shal al the golde departed be
My dere frende, betwixt the and me
Than may we bothe our lustes fulfyl
And play at dyce, right at our owne wyl
And thus accorded ben these threwes tway
To slen the thyrde, as ye herde me say
This yongest, which & went to the towne
Ful often in his herte he rolled vp and downe
The beaute of these florevns fayre & bright
O lorde (q he) yf so were that I might
Haue al this tresour to my selfe alone
There nys no man, that lyueth vnder trone
Of god, that shulde lyue so mery as I
And at the laste the fende our enemy
Put in his thought, that he shuld poyson bey
with which he might sleen his felowes twey
For why, the fende fonde hym in such lyuing
That he had leue to sorowe hym to bring
For this was verely hys entente
To sleen hem bothe, and neuer to repente.
¶ And forth he goth, no lenger wold he tary
Into the towne, vnto a potecary
And prayde hym that he wol hym sel
Some poyson, that he might his rattes quel
And eke there was a polkat in his hawe
That as he sayd, his capons had yslawe
And sayd, he wold wreken hym if & he might
Of vermyn, that destroyed hem by nyght.
¶ The potecary answerde, thou shalt haue
A thyng, as wisely god my soule saue
In al this worlde there nys no creature
That eateth or drinketh of this confecture
Not but the mountenaũce of a corne of whete
That he ne shal hys lyfe anon forlete
Yea sterue he shal, and that in lesse whyle
Thã thou wouldest goon a pace, not but a myle
This poyson is so harde and so violent
¶ This cursed man hath in his honde hent
This poyson in a box, and syth he ran
Into the next strete vnto a man

And borowed

And borowed hym large botels thre
And in the two, the poyson poured he
The thyrde he kept clene for his drinke
For al the night he shope hym for to swynke
In caryeng of the golde out of that place
And whan this riottour, with sorie grace
Had fylde with hym hys great botels thre
To his felowes agen repayred he.
¶ what nedeth it therof to sermon more:
For right as they had cast his dethe before
Right so they han hym slayne, & that anone
And whan this was done, than spake ỳ one
Nowe let vs syt and drinke, & make vs mery
And afterwarde we wolne his body bury
And after that it happed hem per caas
The one toke the botel, therin ỳ poyson was
And dronke, and gaue his felowe drinke also
Through which anon they storue both two.
¶ But certes I suppose that Auycenne
Wrote neuer in no canon ne in no fenne
More wonder sorowes of empoysonnyng
Than had these wretches two in her endyng
Thus ended ben these homicides two
And eke the false empoysonner also.
O cursed synne, ful of al cursydnesse
O traytours homicide, O wickydnesse
O glotonye, luxure, and hasardye
Thou blasphemour of Crist wyth vilanye
And other great, of vsage and of pryde
Alas mankynde, howe may it betyde
That to thy creatoure, which ỳ the wrought
And with his precious bloode the bought
Thou arte so false and so vnkynde, alasse
Now good mé, god forgeue you your trespas
And ware you fro the synne of auarycc
Myne holy pardon, may you al warysche
So that ye offre nobles or sterlynges
Other els syluer spones, broches, or rynges
Boweth your heed vnder this bulle
Cometh vp ye wyues, & offreth of your wol
Your names here I entre in my rolle anon
In to the blysse of heuen shul ye al gon
I you assoyle by myne high powere
Ye that offren, as clene and eke clere
As ye were borne. Lo syrs, thus I preche
And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche
So graunte you hys pardon to receyue
For that is beste, I wol you not deceyue
But sirs, one worde forgate I in my tale
I haue relykes, and pardon in my male
As fayre as any man in Englonde
Which were yeuen me by the popes honde
If any of you wol of deuocion
Offren, and haue myne absolucion
Cometh forthe anon, and knecleth here adoun
And mekely receyueth my pardoun
Or elis taketh pardon as ye wende
Al newe and freshe, at euery townes ende
So that ye offren alway newe and newe
Nobles or pens, whiche ben good and trewe
It is great honour to euerych that is here
That ye may haue a sufficient pardoner
To assoyle you, in countre there ye ryde
For auentures, whiche that may betyde
For peraduenture there may fal one or two
Downe of her horse, & breke her necke a two
Loke whiche seurtie it is to you al
That I am in your felowshyp yfal
That may assoyle you bothe more and lasse
whan that the soule shal fro the body passe
I rede that oure hoste shal begynne
For he is moste enuelopte of synne
Cometh forthe sir hoste, and offre fyrst anon
And thou shalte kysse the relykes euerychon
Ye a for a grote, vnbokyl anon thy purse.
¶ Nay nay (q he) than haue I cristes curse
Let be (q he) it shal not be so theche
Thou woldest make me kisse thyn old breche
And swere it were a relyke of a seynt
Though it were ỳ thy foundemẽt depeynt
But by the crosse, which seynt Helayne fonde
I wolde I had thy coylons in myne honde
In stede of relykes, or of sanctuarye
Let cutte hem of, I wol helpe ỳ hem to carye
They shul be shryned in an hogges torde
This pardoner answerde not a worde
So wrothe he was, he wolde no worde say.
¶ Now (q oure hoste) I wol no lenger play
With the, ne with non other angry man.
¶ But right anon the worthy knight began
whan that he sawe that al the people lough
Nomore of this, for it is right ynough
Sir pardoner, be mery and glad of chere
And ye sir hoste, that ben to me so dere
I praye you that ye kysse the pardoner
And pardoner, I pray the drawe the ner
And as we dyd, let vs laughe and play
Anon they kyssed, and ryden forthe her way.

¶ Here endeth the pardoners tale, & here begynneth the Shipmans Prologue

The Shipmans tale.

Nowe frendes lyfe sure
nothe so dere
How lyketh you by John
the Pardoneres
He hathe beholden wel
the male
He hath vs tolde right a
thrifty tale
As touchyng of hys mysgouernaunce
I pray to god yeue hym good chaunce
As ye han herde, of these cpottours thys
Nowe gentyl maister, hertely I pray the
Tel vs a good tale, and that right anon
It shal be done, by god & by seynt John
Sayd this maryner, as wel as euer I can
And right anon his tale he thus began

Here endeth the Shypmans Prologue, and here followeth hys tale.



A Marchaunt, wholsom
dwelled at saint Denise
That ryche was, for
whiche men held hi wise
A wyfe he had, of ex-
cellent beaute
And chpnable, & re-
uerous was she
Whyche is a thynge
that costeth more dispence
Than worthe is al the chere and reuerence
That men hen done, at festes & at daunces,
Suche salutacions and countenaunces
Passeth, as dothe the shadowe on a wal
But no is hym that paye mote for al
The fery husbonde algate he mote paye
He mote bye his bothe cloth and eke araye
Al for his owne worshippe, richely
In whiche array we daunsen iolyly
And yf that he may not, percaventure
Or elis lust no suche spence endure
But thynketh, that it is wast and ylost
Than mote another paye for our coste
And lende vs golde, and that is perilous
This noble Marchant held a noble hous
For whiche he had al day great repayre
For his largesse, and for hys wyfe was fayre
That wonder is, but herkeneth to my tale
Amonge al his gestes great and smale.
There was a monke, a fayre man & a bolde
I trowe thirty wynter he was olde

The

That euer in one, was drawing to that place
This yonge monke, ꝑ so fayre was of face
Iquaynted was with this good man
Sythens that he fyrst knowlege began
That in his house, as familier was he
As it is possyble any frende to be
And for as moche, as this good man
And eke this monke, of which I began
Were bothe two borne in one village
The monke hym clayned, as for cosynage
And he agayne sayd not ones nay
But was as glad therof, as foule of day
For to his herte it was a great pleasaunce

Thus ben they knytte ỹ eterne alyaunce
And eche of hem gan other for to ensure
Of brotherheed, whyles her lyfe may dure.
¶ Fre was Dan Johan, & namely of dispēce
As in that house, and ful of diligence
To do pleasaunce, and eke great costage,
He forvate not to yeue the leste page
In al that house, but after her degre
He yaue the lorde, and sythen hys meyne
Whan ꝑ he came, some maner honest thyng
For whiche they were as glad of his cōming
As foule is fayne, whan the sonne vp ryseth
No more herof as nowe, for it suffyseth.
¶ But so byfel, this marchaunt on a day
Shope hym to make redy hys aray
Towarde the towne of Bruges for to fare
To bye there a porcion of ware
For whiche he hath sent to parys anon
A messanger, and prayde hath dan John
That he shuld come to saint Denys to playn
With hym, and with his wife, a day or twayn
Or he to Bruges went, in al wyse.
¶ This noble monke, of which I you deuyse
Hath of his abbot, as hym lyst lycence,
Bycause he was a man of hye prudence
And eke an offycer, out for to ryde
To seen her graunges, and her bernes wyde
And vnto saynt Denys he cometh anon.
Who was so welcome as my lord dan John
Our dere cosyn, ful of curtesye
With hym he brought a tubbe of malueseye
And eke another ful of fyne vernage
And volatyl, as was ave his vsage
And thus I let hem both eate, drynke, & play
This marchaunt & this monke, a day or tway
¶ The thyrde day this marchaunt vp ryseth
And on his nede sadly hym auyseth
And vp in to his countrynge house gothe he
To reken with hym selfe, as wel may be
Of thilke yere, howe it with hym stoode
And howe he spended had his goode
And yf that he encreesed were or none
His bokes and his bagges many one
He layethe afore hym, on his counter borde
Ful ryche was hys tresour and his horde
For whiche ful faste his counter doore he shet
And eke he nolde no man shulde hym let
Of hys accomptes, for the mene tyme
And thus he sate tyl it was passed prime.

Dan Johan was ryseu in the morow also
And in the garden walked two and fro
And hath hys thynges sayd ful curtesly.
¶ This good wyfe come walkyng prively
In to the garden, there he walked softe
And hym saluteth, as she hath done ful ofte
A mayden chylde came in her compaynye
Which as her lyste, she may gouerne & gye
For yet vnder the yerde was the mayde.
¶ O dere cosyn dan Johan she sayde
What eyleth you so rathe to aryse?
¶ Nece, quod he, it ought vnough suffyse
Fyue houres for to slepen on a nyght
But it were for an olde palled wight
As ben these old wedded men, that lye & dare
As in a forme sytteth a wery hare
Al forstraught, with houndes grete & smale
But dere nece, why loke ye so pale?
I trowe certes, that our good man
Hath you labboured, sythe this nyght began
That you were nede to resten hastely
And with that worde, he lough ful merily
And with his owne thought he wore al reed

This fayre wyfe, gan to shake her heed
And sayd thus, yea god wote al, quod she)
Nay cosyn myne, it stondeth not so with me
For by that god that yaue me soule and lyfe
In al the realme of Fraunce is there no wife
That lesse luste hath to that foule play
For I may synge alas, and welaway
That I was borne, but to no wight (quod she)
Dare I not tel, howe it stonte with me
Wherfore I thynk out of this world to wed
Or els of my selfe sone to make an ende
So ful I am of drede and eke of care.
¶ This make began vpon this wyfe to stare
And sayd alas, nay nece god forbede
That ye for any sorowe, or for any drede
For do your selfe, but telleth me your greefe
Peraventure I may in your mischefe
Counsayle or helpe, & therfore telleth me
Al your anoye, for it shal secret be

For on my portoure I make an othe
That neuer in my lyfe, for lefe ne lothe
Ne shal I not of no counsayle you bewray.
The same ayen to you (q she) I say
By god and by this portoure, I you swere
Though men wolde me al in to peces tere
Ne shal I neuer, for to go to hel
Bewray o worde, of thyng that ye me tel
Not for no colynage, ne for alyaunce
But verily for loue and affyaunce
Thus ben they swore, and here vpon hyght
And yche of hem tolde other what hem lyste
¶ Colyn (q she) yf I had a space
As I haue none, and namely in this place
Than wolde I tel a legende of my lyfe
That I suffred haue, sythe I was a wyfe
with myn husbonde, though he be your colyn
Nay q this moke by god a seynt Martyn
He nis no more colyn vnto me
Than is this lefe that hongeth on the tre
I clepe him so, by sayntе Denys of Fraunce
To haue the more cause of aquayntaunce
Of you, whom I haue loued specially
Abouen al other women sykerly
This swere I you on my profession
Telleth your grefe, leste he come adoun
And hasteth you, and goth your way anon.
Why dere loue (q she) O my dan John.
Ful lefe me were this counsayle to hyde
But out it mote, it may no lenger abyde
Myn husbonde is to me the worste man
That euer was, sythe the worlde began
But sythen I am a wyfe, it sytte not to me
To tellen no wight of our pryuyte
Neyther in bedde, ne in none other place
God shylde I shulde tel it for his grace
A wyfe ne shulde not say of her husbonde
But al honoure, as I can vnderstonde
Haue vnto you, thus moche tel I shal
As helpe me god, he is nought worthe at al
In no degre, the value of a flye
But yet me greueth moste his nygardye
And wel ye wote, that woman naturally
Desyren thynges syre, as wel as I
They wolden that her husbondes shulde be
Hardy, and wyse, riche, and therto fre
And buxom to his wyfe, and freshe a bedde
But by that yike lorde that for vs bledde
For his honoure, myself to arraye
A sonday next, I mote nedes paye
An hundred frankes, or elis am I lorne
Yet were me leuer that I were vnborne
Than me were done a slaunder or a bilanye
And yf myn husbonde eke might it aspye
I nere but lorne, and therfore I you prey
Lene me this somme, or elis mote I dey
Dan John I say, lene me this hundred frankes
Parde I wol not fayle you my thankes
Ye that ye lyste to do that I you pray
For at a certayne day I wol you pay
And to done you what plesaunce & seruyce
That I may don, right as ye lyste deuyse
And but I do, god take on me vengeaunce
As foule as euer had genilon of Fraunce.
¶ This gentil monke answerd in this manere
Nowe truly myne owne lady dere
I haue (q he) on you so great routhe
That I you swere, and plight my trouthe
That whā your husbōd is to Flaūders fare
I wol delyuer you out of al this care
I wol bringe you an hundred frankes
And with that he caught her by the flankes
And her embraced herde, and kyssed her ofte
Go the nowe your way (q he) al styl & softe
And let vs dyne as sone as euer ye may
For by my kalender it is prime of the day
Go the nowe, & beth as true as I shal be.
Nowe eis god forbyd (q she) sayd she
And forthe she gothe, as ioly as a pye
And bade the cokes that they shulde hem hye
So that men might dyne, and that anone
Vp to her husbonde is this wyfe gone
And knocked at his counter dore boldely.
Qui est la q he Peter it am I
(Quod she) howe longe wol ye fast?
Howe longe tyme wol ye reken and caste
Your sommes, your bokes, & your thynges?
The deuel haue part of al such reckenynges
Ye haue ynough (q she) of goddes sonde
Come down to day, & let your bagges stonde
Ne be ye not a shamed, that dan John
Shal fastyng al this longe day gone
what let vs go here masse and go dyne.
¶ Wyfe (q this mā) lyest thou by myne
The curyous besynesse that we haue
For of chapmen, so god me saue
And by that lorde that called is seynt Iue
Scarsly amonge twenty, twelue shal thryue
Contynuelly, lastyng vnto their age
We may wel make chere & good vysage
And dryue forthe the worlde, as it may be
And kepe our estate in pryuyte
Tyl we be dede, or elis that we play
A pylgrimage, or gone out of the way

And

And therfore haue I great necessyte
vpon this queynte worlde to auyse me
For euermore we mote stonde in drede
Of happe and fortune, in our chapmanhede.
To Flaūders wol I gone to morow at day
And come ayene as sone as euer I may
For whiche my dere wyfe, I the beseke
Be to euery wight buxom and meke
And for to kepe our good be curyouse
And honestly gouerne wel our house
Thou haste ynough, in euery maner wyse
That to a thrifty hul wyfe may suffyse
The lacketh none array, ne no vitayle
Of syluer in thy purse thou mayst not fayle
And with ỳ worde, his counter doze he sherte
And down he gothe, no lenger wold he lette
And hastely a masse was there isayde
And spedely the tables were layde
And to dyner faste they hem spedde
And richly the chapman this monke fedde.
And after dyner, dan Johan soberly
This chapman toke a parte al priuely
And sayd hym thus, cosyn it stondeth so
That wel I se to Bruges ye wol go
God and saynt Austen spede you and gyde
I pray you cosyn, wysely that ye ryde
Gouerneth you also wel of your dyete
Al temperatly, and namely in this hete
Betwixt vs two nedeth no straunge fare
Farwel cosyn, god shylde you fro care
If any thyng there be by day or by nyght
And it lye in my power or in my myght
That ye me wol comaunde in any wyse
It shal be done right as ye wol deuyse
O thyng or that ye go, yf that it may be
I wolde pray you for to lene me
An hundred frankes, for a weke or twey
For certayne beestes, that I mote nedes bey
To store with a place that is ours
God helpe me so, I wolde it were yours
I shal not fayle surely at my day
Nor for a thousande frankes, a myle way
But let this thyng be secret, I you pray
For yet this nyght these beestes mote I bey
And fare nowe wele, myne owne cosyn dere
Graunt mercy of your coste and your chere.
¶ This noble marchaunt, gentilly anon
Answerde and sayd, O cosyn dan John
Nowe sikerly, this is a smal requeste
My golde is yours, whan that you leste
And not only my golde, but my chaffare
Take what ye lyste, god shilde that ye spare
But one thyng is, ye knowe it wel ynough
Of chapmen, that her money is her plough
We may creaunce, whyle we haue a name
But goldlesse for to be it is a shame
Paye it ayen, whan it lythe at your ese
After my might, fayne wolde I you plese
¶ These hundred frankes, set he forthe anon
And priuely he toke hem to dan John
No wight of this worlde, wyst of thys lone
Sauyng this marchaut, and dan Johan alone
They dronken, speke, and rome a while and play
Tyl that dan Johan rydeth to his abbey.
The morow came, and forth ryd this marchāt
To Flaūders warde, his prikes brought him
Tyl he came to Bruges, wel and merily (auāt
Nowe gothe this marchaunt, wel and besily
About his nedes, and byeth, and creaunseth
He neyther playeth at the dyce ne daunseth
But as a marchaunt, shortly to tel
He ledde his lyfe, and there I let him dwel
¶ The sonday next, ỳ this marchāt was gon
To saynt Denys is comen dan John
With crowne and berde al fre the and newe ishaue
In al this house, there nas so lytel a knaue
Ne no wight els, but he was ful fayne
For ỳ my lorde dan John was comen agayn
And shortly to the pointe for to gon
This fayre wyfe acorded with dan John
That for these hundred frankes he shulde al
Haue her in his armes, bolte vpright (night
And this acorde parformed was in dede
In myrthe al nyght a besy lyfe they lede
Tyl it was day, ỳ dan John yede his way
And bade the meyne farwel and haue good day
For none of hem, ne no wyght in the toun
Had of Dan Johan any suspection
And forthe he rydeth, home to his abbey
Or where hym lyste, no more of hym I sey.
¶ This marchaunt, whan ended was ỳ faire
To saynte Denys he gan for to repaire
And with his wyfe he maketh feest and chere
And telleth her that the chaffare is so dere
That nedes muste he make a chenesaunce
For he was bounden in a reconisaunce
To pay twenty thousande shildes anon
For whiche this marchaunt is to Paris gon
To borowe of certayne frendes that he had
Certayne frankes, and some with hym he lad
And whan he was comen in to the toun
For chiefe and great affection
Unto dan John he fyrst gothe hym to play
Nought for to borowe of hym no money

But for to wete and se of his welfare
And for to tellen him of his chaffare
As frendes done, whā they ben mette in fere
Dan Johan him maketh feest & merry chere
And he him tolde ayen ful specially
Howe he had bought, ful wel and graciously
Thonked be god, al hole his marchaundyse
Saue that he muste, in al maner wyse
Waken a cheueisaunce, as for his beste
And than shulde he be in ioye and reste
Whā John answerd, certes I am right fayn
That ye in heale be comen home agayne
And yf I were riche, as haue I blisse
Of twenty thousand shildes shuld ye not misse
For ye so kyndely, this other day
Lent me golde, and as I can and may
I thonke you, by god and by saynt Jame
But nathelesse, I toke it vnto our dame
Your wyfe at home, the same golde agayne
Upon your benche, she wote it wel certayne
By certayne tokens, that I can her tel
Nowe by your leue, I may no lenger dwel
Our abbot wol out of this towne anon
And in his companye I mote gon
Grete wel our dame, myne owne nece swete
And farwele dere cosyn, tyl we mete.
¶ This marchant that was ful ware & wyse
Creaunced hath, and eke payde in parys
To certayne lombardes, redy in her hondes
This somme of gold, & gate of hem ꝑ bondes
And home he gothe, as mery as a popyngay
For wel he knewe he stode in suche aray
That nedes muste he wyn by that viage
A thousande frankes, aboue al his costage.
¶ His wyfe ful redy met hym at the yate
As she was wonte, of olde vsage algate
And al that night in myrthe they be sette
For he was ryche, and clerely out of dette
Whā it was day, this marchāt gan embrace
His wyfe al newe, & kyssed her in her face
And vp he gothe, & made it wonder tough
No more (q he) by god ye haue ynough
And wantonly ayen with hym she playde
Tyl at the laste this marchant thus sayde.
By god (q he) I am a lyte wrothe
With you my wyfe, al though it be me lothe
And wot ye why: by god as I gesse
For ye haue made a maner of straungenesse
Betwixt me and my cosyn dan John
Ye shulde haue warned me, or I had gon
That he had you an hundred frankes payde
By redy token, & helde hym wel apayde
For that I to hym spake of cheuesaunce
Me semed so, as by his countenaunce
But nathelesse, by god our heuen kyng
I thought not to aske of hym nothyng
I pray the wyfe, ne do no more so
Tel me alway er that I fro the go
If any dettour, hath in myne absence
Ypayde the, lest through thy negligence
I myght hym aske a thyng that he hath payd
¶ This wyfe was not a ferde ne affrayde
But boldely she sayd, and that anon
Mary I defye that false monke dan John
I kepe not of his tokens neuer a dele
He toke me certayne golde, I wot it wele
What wel thedom on his monkes snoute
For god it wotte, I wende wythout doute
That he had yeue it me, bycause of you
To don therwith myne honoure & my prow
For coynage, and eke for bellye chere
That he hath had ful often tymes here
But sythe I se it stonte in suche doignte
I wol answere you shortly to the poynte.
Ye haue mo slacker dettours than am I
For I wol pay you wel and redily
Fro day to day, and yf so be I fayle
I am your wyfe, score it on my tayle
Or els I shal pay it as sone as euer I may
For by my trouth, I haue on myne aray
And not in waste, bestowed it euery dele
And for I haue bestowed it so wele
To your honour, for goddes sake I say
Be not wrothe, but let vs laughe & play
Ye shal my toly body haue to wedde
By god I nyl not pay you but a bedde
Forgeue it me, myne owne spouse dere
Turneth hitherwarde, & make better chere.
¶ This marchant sawe ther was no remedy
And for to chyde, it was but a folye
Sythen that the thyng may not amended be
Nowe wyfe he sayd, and I forgeue it the
But in thy lyfe, be no more so large
Kepe bet my good, this yeue I the in charge
Thus endeth nowe my tale, & god vs sende
Talynge ynough, vnto our lyues ende.

Here endeth the Shypmans tale, and here folowyth the wordes of our host.

wyl

Wel sayd by corpus domini (q̄ our hoste)
Nowe longe mote thou sayle by the coste
Thou gentyl mayster, gentel marinere
God gyue ꝑ mōke a thousand last quad pere
Ihā felowes, beware of suche a iape
The mōke put in the marchātes hode an ape
And in hys wynges eke, by sayint Austyn
Draweth no mōkes moze in to your Inne
But nowe passe ouer, & let vs sēke aboute
Who shal tell nowe fyrst of all thys route
An other tale, and wyth that worde he sayde
As curteously, as it had bene a mayde.
My lady prioresse, by your leue
So that I wyste that I shuld you not greue
I wol deme, that ye tellen shulde
A tale nexte, gif so be that ye wolde
Nowe wol ye vouchsafe my lady dere
Gladly, q̄ she, and sayd in thys maniere.

Here ende the wordes of oure hoste, & here begynneth the Prioresse prologue.

Domine dominus noster: quam admirabile est nomen tuum in vniuersa terra,

LOrde our Lorde, thy name how marueylous
Is in thys wyde worlde ysprad (q̄ she)
For not only thy laude precious
Parfourmed is, by men of dygnite
But by the mouth of chyldren thy bounte
Parfourmed is, for on the brest soukynge
Sometyme shewen they thyne heryenge
wherfore in laude, as I can best and may
Of thee and of the whyte lylly floure
wbych that the bare, & is a mayde alway
To tellen a storye, I wol do my laboure
Nought that I may encrese her honoure
For she her selfe is honoure and rote
Of bountye, nexte her sonne of soules bote

Mother mayden, O mayden & mother free
O bushe vnbrent, brennyng in Moses syght
That rauyshedest downe fro the deyte
Through thyn humblesse, ꝑ goost ꝑ in the light
Of whose vertue, whē he in thine hert pight
Conceyued was the fadhers sapience
Helpe me to tel it in thy presence

Lady thy bounte, and thy magnificence
Thy vertue and thy great humilite
There may no tonge expresse, in no science
For somtyme lady, er men pray to the
Thou goest before, of thy benignyte
And gettest vs ꝑ lyght, through thy prayere
To gyden vs vnto thy sonne so dere

My connyng is to weake, O blysful quene
For to declare thy hygh worthynesse
That I ne may the weyght sustene
But as a child of twelue moneth olde or lesse
That can vnnethes any worde expresse
Ryght so fare I, and therfore I you praye
Gyderh my songe, that I shal of you say.

Here endeth the Prioresses prologue, and here folowe-weth her tale.



There was in Asye, in a great cytie
Amonges Cristen folkes a lewrye
Sustayned by a lorde of that countre
For foule vsure, and lucre of vilany
Hateful to Crist, and to his company
And through ꝑ strete mē myght ryde or wende
For it was free, and open at euery ende

A lytel schole of cristen folke there stode
Downe at ꝑ farther end, in which ther were
Chyldren an hepe, comen of cristen blode
That lerned in that schole, yere by yere
Suche manere doctrine, as men vsen here
This is to save, to synge and to rede
As smale chyldren done in her childhede

Amōges these childrē was a wedowes son
A lytel clergion, that vii. yere was of age
That daye by daye to schole was his won
And also eke, where he sey the ymage
Of Cristes mother, had he in vsage
As him was taught, to knele adowne & say
An Aue maria, as he goeth by the way

Thus hath this wedow, her litel child ytawyt
Our blyssed lady, Cristes mother dere
To worshyp ay, and he forgate it naught
For the sely chylde, wolde al day soone lere
But ay, whē I remēbre me on thys matere
Seint Nicholas stādeth euer in my presence
For he so yonge to Crist dyd reuerence

Thys lytel chylde his litel boke lernyng
As he sate in the schole at his prymere
He Alma redemptoris mater herde synge
As chyldren lered her antiphonere
And as he durst, he drewe aye nere and nere
And herkened to the wordes and the note
Tyl he the fyrst verse couth al by rote

Nought wyst he what this latin was to say
For he so yonge and tender was of age
But on a daye his felowe gan he pray
To expoune him the songe, in his langage
Or telle him why this songe was in vsage
Thys prayde he him to construe and declare
Ful ofte tyme, vpon his knees bare

His felowe, which that elder was than he
Answerd him thus, this song I have herde
was made of our blessed lady free (say
Her to salewe, and eke her for to pray
To ben our helpe & socoure when we dey
I can no more expowne in this matere
I lerne songe, I can but smal grammere

And is this songe ymade in reuerence
Of Cristes mother, sayd this innocent
Now certes I wol done myn diligence

To

To conne it al er Christmasse be went
Though that I for my primer shalde shent
And shulde be beten thryse in an houre
I wol it coune, our lady to honoure

Hys felowe taught him homewarde prively
Fro day to daye, tyl he couth it by rote
And then he songe it wel and boldely
Fro worde to worde, accordynge to the note
Twyse a day it passeth through hys throte
To scholewarde, & homeward whe he went
On Christes mother set was al hys entent

As I have sayd through out the iewrie
This lytel childe as he came to and fro
Ful merely then wolde he synge and crye
O Alma redemptoris mater, euer mo
The swetenesse hath his herte perced so
Of Christes mother, that to her to praye
He can not stynte of syngynge by the waye

Our first foe, the serpent Sathanas
That in Iewes herte hys waspes nest
Up swalt and sayd, O ebrayke people alas
Is this a thynge to you that is honest
That such a boy shal walke as him lest
In your despyte, & synge of such sentence
Which is ayenst your lawes reuerence

From thence forth, the iewes han conspyred
This innocent out of this worlde to chase
An homicide therto han they hyred
That in an aley, had a pryuy place
And as the childe gan forby to pace
This cursed iewe him hent, and helde fast
And cutte his throte, & in a pytte him caste

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe
Where that the iewes purged her entrayle
O cursed folke, of herodes al newe
What may your yuel entent you auayle
Murther wol out, certes it wol not fayle
And namely ther the honour of god shal sprede
The bloode out cryeth on your cursed dede

O Wemer, fowned vnto virginite
Now mayst thou synge folowyng euer in on
The whyte lambe celestial, quod he
Of whiche the great euangelyst saynt John
In Pathmos wrote, whiche sayth they gon
Before this lambe, & synge a songe al newe
That neuer flesshly women they ne knewe.

This poore wydowe, awayteth al the nyght
After her lytel childe, and he came nought
For whiche as sone as it was day lyght
With face pale, for drede and busy thought
She hath at scholé, & elswhere him sought
Tyl fynally, she gan so farre aspye
That he was laste seyne in the iurye

With mothers pyte, in her brest enclosed
She goth as she were half out of her mynd
To euery place, where she hath supposed
By lyklyhede her childe for to fynde
And euer on Christes mother, meke & kynde
She cryed, and at the last thus she wrought
Amonge the cursed iewes she him sought

She frayneth and she prayeth pytously
To euery iewe that dwelleth in thylke place
To tellen her, yf her childe went there by
They sayd nay, but Jesu of hys grace
Yaue in her thought, within a lytel space
That in that place, after her sonne she cryde
Where he was cast, in a pyt besyde

O great god, that perfourmest thy laude
By mouth of innocence, lo here thy mygh
Thys temple of chastite, thys Emeraude
And eke of martyrdome the rubye bryght
Where he with throte yeruen lay vpryght
He, Alma redemptoris gan to synge
So loude that al the place gan to ryng

The christen folke, that through the strete went
In comen, for to wonder on this thynge
And hastely they for the prouoste sent
He came anone, with out tarrynge
And heryeth Christ, that is of heuen kynge
And eke hys mother, honour of mankynde
And after that, the iewes let he bynde

This childe with pytous lamentacion
Was vptaken, syngyng his songe alway
And with honoure, and great procession
They caryen him to the nerte abbey
Hys mother swounyng by the bere lay
Vnneth myght the people that were there
This newe Rachel bringe fro his bere

With turmēt & with shamful deth ilke one
This prouost doth these iewes for to sterue
That of this murder wyste, & that anone
He nolde no such cursednesse obserue

Yuell

yuel shal he haue, that yuel wol deserue
Therfore ꝙ wylde horse he dyd hem drawe
And afterwarde he honge hem by the lawe

Upon hys bere aye lyeth thys innocent
Before the chefe aulter, whyles ꝑ masse last
And after that, the abbot wyth hys couent
Hem spedde, for to burye hym ys fast
And when they holy water on hym cast
yet spake ꝑ child, whē spyrit was holy water
And songe, O Alma redemptoris mater.

Thys abbot, whych that was an holy man
As monkes ben, or els ought to be
This yonge chylde to conuer he began
And sayd: O dere chylde, I hayle the
By vertue of the holy Trinite
Tel me what is thy cause for to synge
Sythens thy throte is cutte to my seemynge.

My throte is cutte, vnto my necke bone
Sayd thys chylde, as by waye of kynde
I shulde haue deyde, ye longe tyme agone
But Jesu Christ, as ye in bokes fynde
Wol that hys glorye laste and be in mynde
And for the worshyp of hys mother dere
Yet may I synge (O Alma) loude and clere

This wel of mercy, Christes mother swete
I loued alway, as after my connynge
And when that I my lyfe shulde forlete
To me she came, and bad me for to synge
Thys antem verely in my dyenge
As ye han herde, and when that I had songe
Me thought she layde a grayne vpō my tōge

wherfore I synge, and synge mote certayne
In honoure of the blysfull mayden fre
Tyl fro my tonge, of taken is the grayne
And after that, thus she sayd to me
My lytell chylde, nowe wol I fetche the
when that the grayne is fro thy tonge ytake
Be not agaste, I wol the not forsake.

Thys holy monke, thys abbot him mene I
Hys tonge out caught, and toke away ꝑ graine
And he ꝙue vp the goste ful softly
And when thys abbot had thys wōder seyne
Hys salt teeres trykled downe as rayne
And grofe he fell al platte to the grounde
And stylle he laye, as he had ben ybounde

The couent lay eke vpon the pament
Wepyng and heryeng Christes mother dere
And after that they rysen, and forthe ben went
And toke away this martyr fro the bere
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his lytel body swete
There he is nowe, god lene vs for to mete.

O yonge Hewe of Lyncoln slayne also
With cursed iewes, as it is notable
For it is but a lytel whyle ago
Pray eke for vs, we synful folke vnstable
That of hys mercy, god be merciable
On vs, hys great mercy multiply
For the reuerence of his mother Mary.

Here endeth the Prioresse tale, and here folowe the wordes of the Host to Chaucer.

When sayde was thys myracle, euery man
Is sobre was, as wōder was to se
Tyll that oure hoste to japen began
And than at erste, he loked vpon me
And sayd thus: what man arte thou (ꝙ he)
Thou lokest, as thou woldest fynde an hare
For euer vpon the grounde I se the stare

Aproche nere, and loke by merily
Now ware you syrs, and let this mā haue place
He in the waste is shapen as wel as I
This were a popet in armes to embrace
For any woman, smal and fayre of face
He semeth elyuyshe by his countenaunce
For vnto no wight dothe he dalyaunce

Say now sōwhat, sithēs other folke hā sayd
Tel vs a tale of mirthe, and that anon
Hoste (ꝙ he) ne be not yuel apayde
For other tale certes can I none
But of a ryme, I lerned yore agone
Yea that is good (ꝙ he) we shullen it here
Som daynte thing, me thinketh by thy chere

Here endeth the wordes of the host, and here folowe the ryme of syr Thopas.

Lystenyth

Lystenethistoldinges in good inde
And I wol tel verament
Of myrth and of solas
Al of a knight was fayre & gent
In batayle and in turnament
Hys name was syr Thopas
Iborne he was in farre countre
In Flaundres, al beyonde the se
At Poperynge in the place.
Hys father was a man ful fre
And a lorde he was of that countre
As it was goddes grace.
Syr Thopas was a doughty swayne
whyte was hys face as payne mayne
Hys lyppes reed as rose
Hys rudde is lyke scarlet in grayne
And I you tell in good certayne
He had a semely nose.
Hys heer, hys berde was lyke safroun
That to hys gyrdel raught adoun
Hys shone of cordewane
Of Bruges were hys hosen broun
Hys robe was of chekelatoun
That coste many a jane.
He couth hunte at the wylde dere
And ryde an haukynge forby the ryuere
wyth gray gosshauke on hande
Therto he was a good archere
Of wrastlynge was there none hys pere
There any Ram shulde stande.
Full many a mayde bryght in boure
They mourne for hym paramoure
when hem were bet to slepe.
But he was chaste and no lechoure
And swete as is the bramblefloure
That beareth the reed hyppe
And so byfel vpon a daye
Forsoth, as I you tel maye
Syr Thopas wolde out ryde.
He worth vpon hys stede graye
And in hys honde a launce gaye
A longe swerde by hys syde
He pryckéth thorowe a fayre forestе
Therin was many a wylde beest
Ye both bucke and hare.
And as he pryckéth north and este
I tell you, hym had almeste
Betydde a sorye care.
There spryngen herbes great and smale
The lycorys and the setewale
And many a clowe gelofer
And nutmygges to put in ale
whether it be newe or stale
Or for to lye in cofer.
The bryddes synge, it is no naye
The sperhauke and the popyngaye
That ioye it was to here.
The throstell cocke made hys lay
The wodcocke vpon the spray
She songe full loude and clere.
Syr Thopas fyl in loue longynge
And when he herde the throstel synge
He pryckéd as he were wode
Hys fayre stede in hys pryckynge
So swette, that men myght hym wrynge
Hys sydes were all blode.
Syr Thopas eke so wery was
For pryckynge on the softe gras
So fyers was hys corage
That downe he layde hym in that place
To maken hys stede some solace
And gaue him good forage.
Oh, seynt Mary, benedicite
what ayleth thys loue at me
To blynde me so sore.
Me dremed al thys nyght parde
An elfe quene shal my lemman be
And slepe vnder my gore.
An Elfe quene wol I loue ywys
For in thys worlde no woman is
worthy to be my make in towne
All other women I forsake
And to an Elfe quene I me betake
By daie and eke by downe.
Into hys sadell he clombe anone
And pryckéth ouer style and stone
An Elfe quene for to espye
Tyll he so longe hath rydden and gone
That he fonde in a pryue wone
The countre of Faerye. So wylde
For in that countre was there none
Neyther wyfe ne chylde
Tyl hym there came a great Geaunt
Hys name was called syr Olyphaunt
A perylous man of dede
He sayd chylde, by Termagaunt
But yf thou prycke out of my haunt
Anone I slee thy steed wyth mace
Or euer I go out of thys place
Thou shalt be the quene of Fairy
wyth harpe and pype, and symphony
Dwellynge in thys place.
The chylde sayd, als so mote I the
To morowe wol I meten the

when

When I haue myne armoure.
And yet I hope par ma foye
That thou shalte with this launce gay
Abyen it ful soze: Through thy ma woe
Shal I perce, yf I maye
Or it be fully prime of the daye
For here thou shalt be slawe.
Syr Thopas drowe abacke ful faste
This geaunt at hym stones caste
Out of a fel staffe slynge
But fayze escaped syr Thopace
And al was through goddes grace
And therowe hys fayze berynge
Yet lysteneth lordynges to my tale
Meryer than the nyghtyngale
For nowe I wol ye rowne
Howe syr Thopas, with sydes smale
Prickyng ouer downe and dale
Is comen ayen to towne.
Hys mery man commaunded he
To maken hym bothe game and gle
For nedes muste he fyght
with a geaunt, with heedes thre
For paramoures and loyte
Of one that shone ful bright.
Do come he sayd my mynstrales
And iestours for to telle vs tales
Anon in myne armyng
Of romaunces that ben royals
Of popes and of cardynals
And eke of loue longyng.
They sette hym fyrst the swete wyne
And mede eke in a mazelyne
And royal spycerye
Of gyngerbreed that was ful fyne
Of lycoryce and eke comyne
with sugre that is trye.
He dyd next hys whyte lere
Of clothe of lake fyne and clere
A brech and eke a sherte.
And next his sherte an haberon
And ouer that an haberion
For perryng of hys herte.
And ouer that a fyne hauberke
was al ywrought of ie wes werke
Ful stronge it was of plate
And ouer that hys cote armoure
As whyte as is the lylly floure
In whiche he wolde debate.
His shylde was al of golde so reed
And therin was a bores heed
A carbocle by his syde.
And there he swore on ale and bred
Howe that the geaunt shulde be ded
Betyde what betyde.
His basenet were of cure buly
His swerdes sherthe of yuorie
His helme of laton bryght
His sadel was of rued bone
His bridel as the sunne shone
Or as the moone lyght
His spere was of fyne fyxres
That bydden warre, & nothyng pees
The heed ful sharpe ygrounde
His steede was al dappel graye
Be got he an ambler by the way
Ful softely and rounde in londe.
Lo lordes myne, here is a fyt
If ye wol any moze of it
To tellen it wol I fonde.

Nowe holde your mouthe for chy rite
Bothe knight and lady fre
And herkeneth to my spel
Of batayle and of chyualrye
And of Ladyes loue drery
Anon I wol you tel.
Men speken of Romaunces of pris
Of Horne childe, and of Ipotys
Of Beuys, and of syr Guy
Of syr Lybeaux, and Playndamoure
But syr Thopas, he bereth the floure
Of royal chyualrye.
His good stede he bestrode
And forthe vpon his way glode
As sparke out of the bronde.
Upon his creste he bare a toure
And therin stycked a lilly floure
God shylde his cors fro shonde
And for he was a knyght auentrous
He nolde slepen in none house
But lygge in his hood.
His bryght helme was his wanger
And by hym dranke his destrer
Of brokes fyne and good
Hym self dronke water of the well
As dyd the knyght syr Percyuel
So worthy vnder wede.

Here endeth the ryme of syr Thopas, and beginneth the wordes of mine Hoste.

No more of thys for goddes dignite
(q̄ our hoost) for thou makeſt me
So wery of thy very leudeneſſe
That alſo wysly god my ſoule bleſſe
Myne eares aken of thy draffy ſpeche
Nowe ſuche a ryme, the dyuell I beteche
Thys may wel be cleped ryme dogrel (q̄ he)
why ſo, q̄ I) why wolt thou let me
More of my tale, then any other man
Sens that it is the beſt ryme I can?
By God (q̄ he) playnly at o worde
Thy draffy rymynge is not worth a torde
Thou doeſt nought eis but ſpendeſt tyme
Syr at one worde, thou ſhalt no lēger ryme
Let ſe whether thou canſt tell ought in geſte
Or tel in proſe ſomwhat at the leſte
In which ther may be ſom myrth or doctrine
Gladly (q̄ I) by goddes ſwete pyne
I woll you tell a lytell thynge in proſe
That ought lyke you, as I ſuppoſe
Or els ye be certes to daungerous
It is a moralll tale vertuous
Al be it tolde ſomtyme in ſondry wyſe
Of ſondrye folke, as I ſhall you deuyſe
As this, ye wote that euery euangelyſte
That telleth vs the payne of Jeſu Chriſte
Ne ſayth not al thynge as hys felowe doth
But nathelleſſe her ſentence is al ſoth
And al accordeth in her ſentence
Al be there in her tellynge dyfference
For ſome of hem ſayne more, and ſome leſſe
when they hys pytouſe paſſion expreſſe
I mene me of Marke, Mathew, Luke, & John
But doutleſſe her ſentence is al one
Therfore lordynges, I you beſeche
If that ye thynke I vary in my ſpeche
As this, though I tell ſomwhat more
Of prouerbes, then ye han herde byfore
Comprehended in thys lytel treatyſe here
To enforcen wyth the effecte of my matere
And though I not the ſame wordes ſaye
As ye han herde, yet to all you I praye
Blameth me not, for in my ſentence
Shal ye not fynde moche dyfference
Fro the ſentence of thys treatyſe lyte
After the whych, thys mery tale I wryte
And therfore herkeneth, what I ſhall ſaye
And let me tell my tale I you praye.

Here ende the wordes of our hoſt and here begynneth Chaucers tale of Melibeus.

A Yonge mā called Melibeus, myghtye and ryche, begat vpon hys wyfe that called was Prudence, a doughter which that called was Sophye.

Upon a daye befell that he for his diſporte is wente into the feldes hym to playe: Hys wyfe and eke hys doughter hath he left with in hys houſe, of whyche the dores were faſte yſchette. Foure of hys olde foes han it eſpyde, and ſette ladders to the walles of hys houſe, and by the windowes ben entred, & fette his wyfe and wounded hys doughter with fyue mortall woundes in fyue ſondrye places: That is to ſaye, in her fete, in her handes, in her eeres, in her noſe, & in her mouth, & lefte her for deed, and wente her waye.

When Melibeus retourned was into hys houſe and ſe all thys myſchefe, he lyke a madde mā rentyng hys clothes, gan to wepe and crye.

Prudence hys wyfe, as ferforth as ſhe durſte beſought hym of hys wepynge for to ſtynte: But not for thy he gan to wepe & crye euer lenger the more.

Thys noble wyfe Prudence remembred her vpon the ſentence of Ouide, in hys boke that cleped is the remedye of loue, where as he ſayeth, he is a foole that diſtourbeth the mother to wepe in the death of her chylde tyl ſhe haue wept her fyll, as for a certayne tyme and then ſhall a man done diligence wyth a-miable wordes to recomforte and praye her of her wepynge for to ſtynte. For whych reaſon thys noble wyfe Prudence, ſuffred her huſbonde to wepe and crye, as for a certayne ſpace: and when ſhe ſawe her tyme, ſhe ſayd hym in thys wyſe. Alas my lorde (quoth ſhe) why make ye your ſelfe for to be like a foole? For ſoth it appertayneth not vnto a wyſe man to maken ſuche a ſorowe. Youre doughter wyth the grace of God, ſhall waryſhe and eſcape. And all were it ſo that ſhe right now were deed, ye ne oughte not as for her death

your selfe distroye. Seneke sayethe, the wyse man shal not take to gret discomforte for the dethe of hys children, but certes he should suffre it in pacièce, as wel as he abydeth ꝑ deth of hys owne proper person.

¶ Thys Melibeus answerde anon and sayd: what man (ꝙ he) should of hys wepynge stynt, that hath so great a cause for to wepe? Jesus hym selfe our lorde, wepte for ꝑ dethe of Lazarus hys frende. Prudence answerd, certes wel I wote a temperate wepynge is nothyng defended to hym that sorouful is, amonge folke in sorowe, but it is rather graunted hym to wepe. The apostel Poule vnto ꝑ Romans writeth, men should reioyce with hẽ that maketh ioye, and wepe with suche folke as wepen. But though a temperate wepyng be graunted, certes outragyous wepynge is defended. Measure of wepyng shulde be cõsydred after the lore that techeth vs Seneke. When that thy frende is deed (ꝙ he) let not thyne eyen to moist ben of teeres, ne to moch drie: although teeres comen to thyn eyen, let hem not fal. And when thou hast forgon thy frende, do diligence to gette a nother frende: and this is more wisdom thã for to wepe for thy frende which thou hast loste, for therin is no bote. And therfor yf ye gouerne you by sapience, put away sorowe out of your herte. Remembreth you that Jesus Sirake sayth, a man that is ioyus and glad in herte, it him conserueth flourishyng in hys age: but sothely a sorowful hert maketh hys bones drie. He sayth eke thus, that sorowe in herte sleeth ful manye a man. Salomon sayth, that right as moughthes in the shepes fleyse anoyeth the clothes, and the smale wormes ꝑ tree, right so anoyeth sorowe the hert of man, wherfore vs ought as wel in the dethe of our children, as in the losse of our temporal goodes, haue pacience.

Remembre you vpon pacient Jobe, whã he had loste hys children and hys temporal substaunce, and in hys body endured and receyued ful many a grieuous tribulacion, yet sayde he thus: Oure lorde it sent to me, oure lorde hath byraft it me, right so as our lorde wold, right so it be done, ibleſſed be the name of our lorde.

To these forsayd thinges Melibeus vnto hys wyfe Prudence answerd: Al thy wordes (ꝙ he) ben true, and therto profytable, but truely myn herte is troubled with this sorowe so grieuously, that I not what to do. Let cal (ꝙ Prudence) youre true frendes al and thy lynage, which that ben wyse, and telleth hem your case, and herkeneth what they say in counsayling, and gouerne you after her sentence. Salomon sayethe, werke all thy thynges by counsayle, and thou shalte neuer rue. Than by cõsayle of his wife Prudẽce, this Melibeus let caule a great congregacion of people, as surgyens, physicions, olde folke and yong, and some of hys olde enemyes reconciled (as by her semblant) to hys loue and to hys grace: And therwithal ther came some of his neighbours, that dyd hym reuerẽce more for drede thã for loue, as it happeth oft. There comen also ful many subtyl flatterers, and wyse aduocates lerned in the law. And whã these folke togyders assembled were, this Melibeus in sorowfull wyse shewed hem his case, and by the maner of his speche it semed that in herte he bare a cruel yre, redy to don vengeaunce vpon hys foos, and sodainly he desyred ꝑ werre shulde begyn, but natheles yet asked he counsayle vpon this mater. A surgyen by leeue and assent of suche as were wyse vp rose, and vnto Melibeus sayd as ye shal here.

¶ Sir (ꝙ he) as to vs surgiens apertayneth that we do to euery wight the best that we can, where as we ben withholde, and to our pacient that we don no damage: wherfore it happeth many tyme and ofte, that when two men haue euerriche wounded other, one surgyen healeth hem both, wherfore vnto our arte it is not pertinẽt to noulbe werre ne parties to supporte. But certes as to the warysshyng of your doughter, al be it so that perilously she be wounded, we shal do so ententyf besynesse fro day to night that with ꝑ grace of god she shal ben hole and sounde, as sone as is possible. Almost right in the same wyse the physicions answerd, saue that they sayde a fewe wordes more: That right as maladies ben by her contraries cured, right so shal man warisshe werre by peace. Hys neyghbours full of enuye, hys fayned frendes that semed reconciled, and his flatterers, made semblaunce of wepyng, and empayred and agrutched moche of this mater, in prayisinge greatly Melibe of might, of power, of richesse and of frendes, dispysing the power of his aduersaries: and sayd vtterly, that he anon shulde

wreken

wreken hym on hys foos, and begyn warre.

Up roſe then an aduocat that was wyſe bylene and by counſayle of other that were wyſe, and ſayd: The nede for the whych we bene aſſembled in thys place, is a full heuye thynge, & a great matter bycauſe of ꝑ wronge and of the wyckednesſe that hath be done, & eke by reaſon of great damages that in tyme comynge ben poſſyble to fallen for ꝑ ſame, and eke by reaſon of the great rycheſſe and po wer of the partyes both, for the whyche reaſons it were a full greate peryll to erren in thys matter. Wherfore Melibeus thys is oure ſentence, we counſayle you abouen all thynge, that ryghte anone thou do thy dely gence in kepynge of thy ꝓper perſone, in ſuche a wyſe that thou ne wante none eſpye ne watche, thy bodye for to ſaue: And after that we counſayle that in thyne houſe thou let ſuffyſed garryſon, ſo as they may as well thy bodye as thy houſe defende: but certes to mouen warre, or to done ſodeynly vengeaunce we may not deme in ſo lytel tyme ꝑ it were ꝓfytable, wherfore we aſke leyſer & ſpace to haue delyberacion in thys caſe to deme, for the commen ꝓuerbe ſayeth thus: he that ſone demeth ſone ſhall repente. And eke men ſayne, thylke iudge is wyſe that ſone vnderſtandeth a matter, and tarieth by leyſer: For all be it taryenge be noyfull, algate it is not to be reꝓued in peuynge of iudgemente, ne in vengeaunce takynge, when it is ſufficyent and reſonable. And that ſhewed oure Lorde Jeſu Chriſte by enſample, for when the wo man was take in auoutry and was brought in hys preſens to knowen what ſhulde be done of her perſone, al be it that he wyſt wel hym ſelf what he wold anſwere, yet ne wold he not anſwere ſodeynly, but he wolde haue delyberacion, and in the grounde he wrote twyſe, and by thys cauſe we aſken delyberacion: and we ſhall then by the grace of God counſayle you ꝑ thynge that ſhalbe ꝓfytable

Up ſterte then the yonge folke at ones, & ꝑ moſte parte of that company haue ſcorned thys olde wyſe man, and begã to make noyſe and ſayde. Ryght ſo as whyles that yron is hote men ſhulde ſmyte, ryghte ſo men ſhulde wreken her wronges whyle that they bene freſhe and newe, and wyth loude voyce they cryed warre warre. Up roſe tho one of ꝑ old wyſe, & wyth hys hande made countenaunce that they ſhulde holde hem ſtyl & yeuen hym audience. Lordynges (q he) ther is ful many a man that cryeth warre warre, ꝑ wote full lyte what warre amounteth. Warre at hys begynnynge hath ſo great an entryng and ſo large, that euery wyght may entre whẽ hym liketh, & lightly fynd warre: but certes what ende therof ſhal fal, it is not lightly to know. When ꝑ warre is ones bygon, there is full many a chylde vnboune of hys mother, ꝑ ſhal ſterue yõge bycauſe of thilke warre, other elſ lyue in ſorowe, or dye in wretchednesſe: And therfore or ꝑ any warre be bygon, men muſte haue great counſayle & good delyberacion. And when thys olde man wende to enforcen hys tale by reſon, well nye all at ones bygon for to ryſe for to breken hys tale, & bydde hym ful ofte hys wordes for to abrege: For certes he ꝑ precheth to hem that lyſt not to here his wordes, his ſermõ hem anoyeth. For Jeſus Syrake ſayth, ꝑ weping in muſyke is a noy ous thynge. This is as moch to ſay as moch auayleth it to ſpeake byfore folke to which his ſpeche anoyeth, as it is for to ſyngen by fore hem that wepe. And when thys wyſe man ſawe ꝑ him wãted audiẽce, al ſhamfaſte he ſet him adowne aven. For Salomõ ſayth. There as thou mayſt not haue audience, en force the not to ſpeake. I ſe wel, q thys wyſe man that the cõmen ꝓuerbe is ſoth, ꝑ good counſayle wanteth, when it is moſte nede.

Yet had thys Melibeus in hys counſayle many folke, that priuely in hys eere counſay led hym certayne thynges, and counſayled hym the contrary in general audience. when Melibeus had herde that the greateſt parte of hys counſayle were accorded that he ſhuld make warre, anone he conſented to her cou ſaylynge, and fully affyrmed her ſentence. Then dame Prudence, when that ſhe ſawe her huſbonde ſhope hym for to awreke hym on hys enemyes, & to begyn warre: ſhe in ful hubie wyſe, when ſhe ſawe her tyme ſayd to hym theſe wordes. My lord (q ſhe) I you be ſeche as hertely as I dare or can, ne haſt you not to faſt, and for all guerdons yeue me au dience. For Peter Alphos ſayth. Who ſo doth to the good or harme, haſt the not to quyte it for in thys wyſe thy frende woll abyde, and thyne enemye ſhall the lenger lyue in drede. The ꝓuerbe ſayth, he haſteth wel ꝑ wiſely can abyde: And in wycked haſt is no profyte.

Thys Melibe answered to hys wyfe Pru dence: I purpose not (quoth he) to werke by thy counsayle, for many causes and reasons, for certes euery wyght wolde holde me then a foole. Thys is to saye, yf I for thy counsayl ynge wolde chaunge thynges that bene ordayned and affyrmed by so many wyse. Secondly, I saye that all women bene wycked, and none good of hem all. For of a thousande men sayeth Salomon, I founde one good man: but certes of all women fonde I neuer none. And also certes, yf I gouerned me by thy counsayle, it shulde seme that I had yeue the ouer me the maystrye: and God forbyd þ it so were. For Jesus Syrache sayeth, that yf the wyfe haue maystrye, she is contrarious to her husbande. And Salomon sayeth. Neuer in thy lyfe to thy wyfe, ne to thy chylde, ne to thy frende, ne yeue no power ouer thy selfe, for better it were that thy chyldren aske of thy thinges that hem nedeth then thy frende to be in the handes of thy chyldren. And also yf I woll werche by thy counsayle, certes my counsayle must be somtyme secret tyl it were tyme that it muste be knowen: and thys ne may not be, yf I shulde be counsayled by the. When dame Prudence full debonairly and with great patiēce, had herde al that her husbonde lyked for to saye, then asked she of hym lycence for to speake, and sayd in thys wyse. My lorde (quoth she) as to youre fyrste reason, it maye lyghtly ben answered. For I saye that it is no folye to chaunge counsayle, when the thynge is chaunged, or els when þ thynge semeth otherwyse thē it semed afore. And more ouer I saye, thoughe that ye haue swore and behyght to performe youre emprysse, & by iuste cause ye do it not: men shulde not saye therfore ye were a lyer & forswore. For the boke sayeth, that the wyse man maketh no lesynge, when he turneth hys corage for the better. And albeit that youre emprysse be establyshed and ordeyned by great multytude of folke, yet dare you not accomplyshe thylke ordynaunce but you lyketh: for the trouth of thynges and the profyte ben rather founden in fewe folke that ben wyse and full of reason, then by greate multytude of folke, there euery man cryeth and clatereth what hym lyketh: soothly suche multytude is not to prese. And as to the seconde reason, where as ye saye, that all women ben wycked: saue youre grace. Certes ye dyspyse all women in thys wyse, and he that all despyseth, as sayeth the boke, all displeaseth. And Senecke sayeth, that who so woll haue sapience, shal no man dyspraye, but he shall gladlye teache the science that he can, without presumption or pryde: and suche thynges as he nought ne can, he shall not ben ashamed to lerne hem, & to enquyre of lesse folke then hym selfe. And that there hath bene many a good woman, maye lyghtly be proued: For certes syr our Lorde Jesu Christ nolde neuer haue descended to be borne of a woman, yf al women had be wycked. And after that, for þ great bounte that is in women, our lorde Jesu Christ, whē he was ryssen fro death to lyfe, apered rather to a woman then to his apostles. And though that Salomon sayde, he founde neuer women good, it folowyth not therfore that all women be wycked: for thoughe that he ne founde no good woman, certes many an other man hathe founde many a woman full good and trewe. Or els paraventure the entente of Salomon was thys, that in soueraygne bountye he founde no woman, thys is to saye: that there is no wyght that hath parfyte bountye saue God alone, as he hym selfe recordeth in hys euangelye. For there nys no creature so good that hym ne wanteth somwhat of the perfection of God that is hys maker. Youre thyrde reason is thys, ye saye that yf that ye gouerne you by my counsayle it shulde seme that ye had yeue me the maystrye and the lordshyppe of youre persone. Syr saue youre grace it is not so, for yf it were that no man shulde be counsayled but onely of hem that han lordshyppe and maystrye of hys persone, men nolde not be counsayled so ofte. For soothly thylke man that asketh counsayle of a purpose, yet hathe he free wyl whether he woll do after that counsayle or none. And as to youre fourth reason, there as ye sayne that the iangletye of women can hyde thinges that they wote not, as who sayeth, that a woman can not hide that she woot. Syr, these wordes ben vnderstande of women that ben iangleres and wycked, of whiche women men sayne that thre thinges dryue a mā out of hys house, that is to saye, smoke droppynge of rayne, and wycked wyues. And of suche women Salomon sayeth, that a man were better dwell in deserte, then

with

wyth a woman that is riottous. And syr by your leaue it am not I, for ye haue ful oft shewde my great sylence and my greate pacience, and eke howe well that I can hyde and kele thynges that men oughten secretly to hyden. And sothly as to youre fyfth reason, where as ye saye that in wycked counsayle women venquysshe men: God wote that thylke reason stante here in no stede: for vnderstanderh, nowe ye asken counsayle for to do wyckednesse: And yf ye wolde werken wyckednesse, your wyfe restrayneth thylke wycked purpose, and ouercome you by reason and by good counsayle, certes your wyfe ought rather to be praysed then blamed. Thus shuld ye vnderstande the philosopher that sayeth, in wycked counsayle women venquysshe her husbandes. And there as ye blame all women and her reasons, I shall shewe you by many ensamples that manye women haue be full good, and yet bene, and her counsayle holsome and profytable. Eke some men haue sayde that the counsayle of women is eyther to dere, or to lytell worthe But all be it so that full many women bene badde, and her counsayle vyle and nought worthe, yet han men founde full many a good woman, and full discrete and wyse in counsaylynge. Lo Jacob through the counsayle of hys mother Rebecke, wanne the benyson of hys father, and ꝑ lordshyp of all hys brethren. Judeth through her good counsayle, delyuered the cyte of Bethule, in whyche she dwelt, out of the hãde of Holoferne that had it al besieged, and wolde haue dystroyed it. Abygayle delyuered Nabail her husbande fro Dauid the kynge, that wold haue slayne him and apeased the yre of the kynge by her wyte and by her good counsayle. Hester by her counsell enhaunsed greatly ꝑ people of god in the raygne of Assuerus the kynge. And the same bountye in good counsaylyng of many a good woman may men rede and tell. And furthermore when that our lorde had created Adam oure former father, he sayd in thys wyse: It is not good a man to be alone: make we an helper to hym selfe semblable. Here maye ye se that yf that women were not good, and her counsayle good and profytable, our lorde god of heuen ne wolde neither han wrought hem, ne called hem the helper of man, but rather confusyon to man.

And there sayde a clerke ones in two verses. What is better thẽ gold? Jasper. What is better then Jasper? wysedome. And what is better then wysedome? woma. And what is better then a good woman? that is a good man. And what is better then a good man? nothynge. And syr, by many other reasons maye ye sene, that many women bene good, and eke her counsayle good and profytable. And therfore syr, yf that ye woll truste to my counsayle, I shall restore you your doughter hole and sounde, and eke that I woll do you so moche, that ye shall haue honoure in thys case.

When Melibe had herde the wordes of hys wyfe prudence, he sayd thus. I se well that wordes of Salomon be soth. For he sayeth, the wordes that be spoken dyscretlye by ordynaunce bene honycombes, for they yeuen swetnesse to the soule, and holsomnesse to the bodye. And wyfe because of thy swete wordes, and eke for I haue proued and assayed thy greate sapience and thy greate trouthe: I woll gouerne me by thy counsayle in all thynge.

Nowe syr (quoth dame Prudence) and sythens that ye vouchsafe to be gouerned by my counsayle, I woll enfourme you howe that ye shall gouerne youre selfe in chosynge of your counsaylours. Ye shall fyrste in all youre werke mekelye beseechynge to the hye God that he wolde be your counsayleur, and shapeth you to suche entent that he yeue you counsayle and comforte, as taught Thobye hys sonne. At all tymes thou shalte thanke God, and praye hym to dresse thy wayes, and loke eke that thy counsayles ben in hym euer more. Saynt James sayeth, yf anye man of you haue nede of sapience, aske it of God. And afterwarde, then shullen ye take counsayle in youre selfe, and examyne well youre owne thoughtes, of suche thynges as you thynketh that ben best for youre profyte. And then shall ye dryue fro your herte thynges that be cõtrarious to good counsayle: that is to saye, yre, couetous, and hastynesse.

Fyrste he that asketh counsayle of hym selfe, certes he muste be wythouten yre and wrath in hym self for many causes. The fyrst is thys: he that hath greate yre and wrathe in him selfe, he weneth alwaye that he maye do the thynge ꝑ he may not do. And secõdly,

he that is ryous and wrothfull, he maye not wel deme: And he that maye not wel deme, maye not well counsell. The thyrde is thys, he that is ryous & wroth, as sayeth Seneke, maye not speake but blamefull thynges, and wyth thylke vycious wordes he styreth other folke to anger and to ire. And eke syr ye muste dryue couetyse out of your herte. For the Apostle sayeth, that couetyse is the roote of all harmes. And trusteth ryght wel that a couetous man ne can not deme ne thynke but only to fulfyll the ende of hys couetyse: & certes that ne maye neuer be accomplyshed, for euermore, the more aboudaunce that he hath of rychesses, the more he desyreth. And syr, ye muste also dryue out of your herte hastynes: For certes ye maye not deme for the best a sodayne thought that falleth in your herte, but ye muste auyse you on it full ofte: For as ye haue herde here byfore, the comē prouerbe is thys. He that sone demeth, sone repenteth.

Syr, ye ne be not alwaye in lyke dyspoſicion, for certes some thynge that semeth somtyme to you ꝑ is good for to do, an other time it semeth to you the contrarye.

And when ye han taken counsaile in your selfe, and han demed by good deliberacion suche thynge as you semeth beste, then rede I you that ye kepe it secrete. Bewraye ye not your counsayl to no persone, but yf so be that ye were sekerly that through youre bewrayeng your cōdicion shalbe to you the more profytable. For Jesus Syrach sayeth: neyther to thy foe ne to thy frende dyscouer not thy secrete, ne thy folye: for they wol yeue you audience and lokynge, & supportacion in youre presence, and scorne you in your absence. An other clerke sayth, that scarsly shal you fynde any persone that maye kepe counsayle secretly The boke sayeth, whyle that thou kepest thy counsayle in thyne herte, thou kepest it in thy pryson: and when thou bewrayest thy counsayl to any wyght, he holdeth ꝑ in hys snare And therfore you is better to hyde your counsayle in your herte, then to pray hym to whō ye haue bewrayed your counsayle, ꝑ he woll kepe it close fyl. For Seneca sayeth: yf so be ꝑ thou mayst not thyne owne counsayle hyde, howe darste thou praye any other wight thy counsayle secrete to kepe. But natheleſſe yf thou were syckerly that the bewrayeng of thy counsayle to a persone woll make thy condycion stonde in ꝑ better plyght, then shalt thou tell hym thy counsayle in thys wyse. Fyrſt thou shalte make no semblaunt whether the were leuer peace or warre, or thys or that, ne shewe hym not thy wyll ne thyne entent: for trust well that comenly these counsayleers ben flatterers, namely the counsayleers of great lordes, for they enforce hem alway rather to speake pleasaunt wordes, enclynynge to the lordes luste, then wordes that bene trewe & profytable, and therfore men saye ꝑ the rych man hath selde good counsayle, but yf he haue it of hym selfe. And after that thou shalt consyder thy frendes and thyne enemyes. And as touchynge thy frendes, thou shalte consyder whych of hem ben moste faythful & most wyse, and eldest, and moste approued in counsaylynge: and of hem shalt thou aske thy counsayle, as the case requyreth.

I saye, that fyrſt ye shal call to your counsayle your frendes that ben trewe. For Salomon sayeth: that ryght as the herte of a man delyteth in sauoure that is sote, ryght so the counsayle of trewe frendes yeueth swetnesse to the soule. And he sayeth also, there may no thynge be lykened to the trewe frende: For certes golde ne syluer be not so moche worth as the good wyll of a trewe frende. And also he sayeth that a trewe frende is a stronge defence who so that it fyndeth hath a great treasure. Then shall ye also consyder yf that your true frendes be discrete and wyse: for the boke sayeth, aske alwaye thy counsayle of them that ben wyse. And by thys same reason shall ye call to your counsayle your frendes that ben of age, suche as seme and ben expert in many thynges, and ben approued in counsayling For the boke sayeth, that in olde men is sapience, and in longe tyme the prudence. And Tullius sayeth, that great thynges bene nat aye accomplyshed by strength ne by delyuernesse of body, but by counsayle, by auctorite of persones, and by science: the whych thinges ne ben not feble by age, but certes they enforce, and encreasse daye by daye, and thus shall ye kepe thys for a generall rule. Fyrſte shall ye call to your counsayle a fewe of your frendes that ben especial. For Salomon sayeth, many frendes haue thou, but amonge a thousande chose the one to be thy counsaylour for al be it so that thou fyrſt ne tell thy counsayle but to a fewe, thou mayste afterwarde

tell

tel it to mo folke yf it be nede. But loke alway that thy counsayleres haue those condicions that I haue sayd before, that is to saye, that they be trewe, wyse, and of olde experience. And werke not alway in euery nede by one counsayler alone: for somtyme behoueth it to be counsayled by many. For Salomon saythe, saluacio of thynges is where as there be many counsayleres.

Nowe haue I tolde you of which folke ye shall be counsayled: Nowe wol I tel you whiche counsayle ye ought to eschue. Fyrste ye shall eschue the counsaylynge of fooles. Salomon sayth, take no counsayle of a foole for he wol counsayle but after his owne lust and hys affection. The boke saythe, that the propertie of a foole is this: He troweth light by harme of euery man, and lightly troweth al bountie in hym selfe. Thou shalt eschue the counsaylyng of al flatterers, which as enfor of hem rather to prayse your persone by flatterye, than for to tell you the sothfastnesse of thynges. Wherfore, Tullius saith, amonge al the pestelence that ben in frendshyp, the greatest is flaterye. And therfore it is more nede that thou eschue and drede flatterers, thā any other people. The boke sayth, thou shalt rather flee fro the swete wordes of flatering and praysynge than fro the ergre wordes of thy frendes that sayth the sothes. Salomon sayth that the wordes of a flaterer is a snare to catche innocence. He sayth also, he that speketh to his frende wordes of flatery & of plesaunce, he setteth a nette before hys fete to catche hym. And therfore Tullius sayth. Enclyne not thyne eares to flatterers. And Caton sayth. Auyse the wel, and eschue ỳ wordes of swetnesse and of pleasaunce. And eke thou shalt eschue the counsaylynge of thyne olde enemyes that ben reconciled. The boke sayth, that no wight retourneth safely in to the grace of his olde enemy. And Esope saith ne trust not to hem, to whiche thou hast somtyme had werre or enemyte, ne tell hem not thy counsayle. And Seneke telleth the cause why it may not be, for he saith, there as great fyre hath longe tyme endured, ỳ there dwelleth some vapoure of hete. And therfore saith Salomon, in thyn olde foe trust thou neuer. For sikerly though thy enemy be reconciled and make the semblaunt of humilite, and lout to the with hys heed, truste hym neuer: for certes he maketh thilke fayned humylite more for hys profyte than for any humilite, or for any loue of thy person, bycause ỳ he demeth to haue victorie ouer thy persone, by suche fayned countynaunce, the whych victorie he myght not haue by stryfe or werre. And Petrus Alphons saith, make no felowship with thyne olde enemyes, for yf thou do hem bountye, they wollen peruerte it to wyckednesse. And eke thou must eschue the counsaylynge of hem that ben thy seruauntes, and beren ỳ gret reuerence: for parauenture they saven it more for drede than for loue. And therfore sayth a philosopher in this wyse. There is no wyght parfetly true to hym ỳ he dredeth And Tullius saith, there is no might so great of any emperour that longe may endure, but he haue loue of the people and drede. Ye shall eschue also the counsaylyng of folke that ben dronkelewe, for they ne can no counsayle hyde. For Salomon sayth, there nys no priuyte ther as reygneth dronkenesse, ye shal haue also in suspecte the counsaylyng of suche folke as counsayle you one thynge priuely, and counsayle you the contrary openly. For Callidore saith, that it is a maner sleight to hynder his enemye whan he theweth to done a thynge openly, and werketh priuely the contrarye. Thou shalte haue also in suspecte the counsaylyng of wycked folke, that be alway ful of fraude. And Dauid sayth, that blisful is the man that hath not folowed the counsaylyng of shrewes.

Thou shalte also eschue the counsaylynge of yonge folke, for her counsaylynge is not rype, as Salomon sayth.

Nowe sir, sythens I haue shewed you of suche folke as ye shal be counsayled of, and folowe it: nowe woll I teche you howe ye shal examyne your counsayle. After the doctrine of Tullius, in examenynge of youre counsayloures, ye shall consydere manye thynges.

Fyrst thou shalt cōsyder thylke thyng that thou purposest, and vpon that thynge ỳ thou wolt haue counsayle, that very trouth be said and cōserued, this is to say, tel truely thy tale for he that sayth falsse, may not well be counsayled in that case, of whiche he lyeth. After this thou shalte consyder the thynges that accorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy cōsayloures, if reason accorde therto, and eke

yf thy might maye attayne therto, and if the more parte and the better parte of your counsaylours accorden therto or no. Than shalte thou consyder what thynge shal folowe of her counsaylinge: As hate, peace, werre, grace profyte, or damage, and many other thinges: and in al thynges thou shalte chose the beste, and weyue al other thynges. Thā shalt thou consyder of what rote is engendred the mater of thy counsayle, and what frute it maye conceyue and engender. Thou shalt eke consyder al thy causes, frome whence they be spronge. And whan thou hast examyned thy counsayle, as I haue sayd, and whiche party is the better and more profytable, and hast approued it by many wyse folke & olde, than thou shalt consyder, yf thou mayste performe it, & make of it a good ende. For certes reson wol not that any mā shal begyn a thyng, but yf he myght performe it as hym ought ne no wight shuld take vpon hym so heuy a charge but that he might beare it. For the prouerbe sayth, he that to moch embraceth distraineth lytel. And Caton sayth, assay to do such thinges as thou hast power to done, lest the charge oppresse the to sore, that the behoueth weyue the thyng that thou hast begon. And yf so be that thou be in dout, whether thou mayst performe a thynge or none, chose rather for to suffre than to begynne. And Peter Alphons sayth, yf thou haste myght to do a thynge, of whiche thou muste repente, it is better holde thy tonge styl than for to speke. Than mayst thou vnderstonde by stronger resons, that yf thou haste power to performe a werke, of which thou shalt repente the, than is it better thou suffre than begyn. Wel sayne they that defenden euery wyght to assaye a thyng of which he is in doute whether he may performe it or none. And after whan ye haue examined your counsayle (as I haue sayde before) and know wel that ye maye performe your emprise: confermeth it thā sadly tyl it be at an ende.

Nowe it is reason & tyme that I shewe you, whan & wherfore that ye maye chaunge your counsayle, wythouten reproue. Certenly a man may chaunge hys purpose and hys counsayle, yf the cause ceaseth, or whan a newe case betydeth. For the lawe sayth, that vpon thinges that newly betyden, behoueth newe counsayle. And Seneke sayth, yf thy counsayle is come to the eeres of thyne enemyes, chaunge thy counsayle. Thou mayste also chaunge thy counsayle, yf so be thou fynde that by errour or by anye other cause, harme or damage may betyde. Also yf thy counsayle be dyshoneste, other els come of dyshoneste cause, chaunge thy counsayle. For the lawe sayth, that al behestes that be dishoneste, ne ben of no value: And eke, yf so be that it be vnpossyble or may not gladly be performed or kepte.

And take thys for a general rule, that euery counsayle that is enfourmed so strongly, that it may not be chaunged for no condycion that may betyde, I say that ilke counsayle is wycked.

Melibeus, whan he hadde herde the doctryne of hys wife dame Prudence answerde in thys wyse. Dame (quod he) as yet vnto this tyme ye han well taught me, as in gouernayle howe I shall gouerne me in the chosynge and in the wytholdynge of my counsayle: but nowe wolde I fayne yf ye wolde condiscende in especial, howe that ye semeth by our counsaylours that we haue chose in this present nede.

Certes lorde (quod she) I beseche you in all humblesse, that ye wol not wylfully repreue ayenst my resons, ne distempre youre herte though I speke the thynge yf you displese, for god wote as in myne entent, I speke it as for youre beste and for your honoure and profyte eke, and sothly I hope that your benygnyte wol take it in patience. And trusteth me wel that your counsayle in this case ne shuld not (as to speke properly) be called a counsaylyng, but a mocion or a mouynge of folye, in which counsayle ye haue erred in many a sondry wyse.

First ye haue erred in the assemblynge of your counsaylours: For first ye shulde haue cleped a fewe folke to your counsayle, and after ye might haue shewed it to mo, yf it had be nede. But ye haue cleped to your counsayl a great multytude of people, ful chargeous and ful noyous for to here. Also ye haue erred, for there as ye shulde haue onely cleped to your counsayle your trewe frendes, olde and wyse, ye haue cleped straunge folke, yonge folke, false flatterers, and enemyes reconcyled, and folke that done you reuerence

wythouten loue. And eke ye haue erred, for ye haue brought with you to your counsayle ire enuyde, and hastynesse, the which thre thynges ben contrary to euerye good counsayle, honest and profytable, the whiche thre thynges ye haue not destroyed neyther in youre herte ne in your counsaylours, as ye ought. Ye haue erred also for ye haue shewed to your counsaylours your talent and your affectiõ to make werre anon, & for to do vengeaunce, & they haue espyde by your wordes, to what thyng ye ben enclyned: & therfore haue they rather counsayled you to your talente, than to your profite. Ye han erred eke, for it semeth that you suffyseth to haue be counsayled by these counsaylours onely, and with lytel auysement, where as in so hye and in so great a nede, it had ben necessary mo counsaylours, and more delyberacion to performe your emprise. Ye hã erred also, for ye haue not dampned your counsayle in the forsayd maters, ne in dewe maner as the case requireth. Ye haue erred also, for ye made no diuision betwene your true frendes & your fayned cõsaylours ne ye haue not knowē ꝑ wil of your trew cõsaylours, & frendes olde, & wyse, but ye haue take al her wordes in an hochepot & enclyned your herte to the more parte and to the grettest nombre of fooles than of wyse men. And therfore the counsaylynges that ben at congregacions and multitudes of folke, there as men take more regarde to the nombre than to the sapiẽce of persons, ye sene wel, that in such counsaylinges, fooles han the maistrye.

Melibe answerde and sayd ayen: I graunte wel that I haue erred, but there as thou hast told me here byforne, ꝑ he nys not to blame that chaungeth his cõsayle in certayne case and for certayne and iuste cause, I am al redy to chaunge my counsaylours ryght as thou woldest deuyse. The prouerbe sayth, for to done synne is mannyssbe, but certes for to persiuer longe in synne, is a werke of the dyuell.

To thys sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and sayd: Examyneth (ꝙ she) wel your counsayle, and let vs se whyche of hem hath spoke moste resonably, and taught you beste counsayle. And for as moche as the examinacion is necessarye, lette vs begyn at surgens and physiciens, that first spake of thys matter. I saye that physiciens and surgiens haue sayd you in your counsayle discretly, as hem ought: and in her speche sayd ful wisely, that to the office of hem apertayneth to done to euery wight honoure and profyte, and no wyght to anoye, and after her crafte to don great dyligence vnto the cure of hem, whych they haue in her gouernaunce. And sir, right as they haue answerde wysely and discretly, right so rede I that they ben hyely and soueraynly guerdoned for her noble speche, & eke for they shul more done theyr entencyon besynesse in the curacion of your doughter: for al be it so they ben your frendes, therfore shulle ye not suffre, that they serue you for naught, but ye ought therafter guerdõ hem, and pay hem her largesse. And as touchyng the propoſicion, whyche the physiciens entreteden in in this case, this is to sayne, that in maladies is, that contrarie is warished by an other cõtrarie: I wolde fayne knowe howe ye vnderstonde thylke terme, & what is your sentence? Certes (ꝙ Melibeus) I vnderstonde it in thys wyse. Right as they han do me a contrarye, so shulde I done hem an other, for ryght as they han venged hem vpon me, and done me wronge, ryght so wõll I venge me vpon hem, and don hem wronge, and than haue I cured one contrarie by an other.

Lo, lo (ꝙ dame Prudence) how lightly is euery man enclyned to hys owne delyte and hys owne plesaunce. Certes (ꝙ she) the wordes of the physiciens ne shuld not ben vnderstonde in that wyse, for certes wyckednesse is not contrarie to wickednesse, ne vengeaunce is not contrarie to vengeaunce, ne wronge to wronge, but euery of hem encreseth & engendreth other. But certes ꝑ wordes of the physiciens shulde be vnderstonde in thys wyse, for good and wyckydnesse ben two contraries: and peace and werre, vengeaunce and suffraunce, discorde and acorde, and many other thynges: But certes wyckidnesse shalbe warished with goodnes, discorde by acorde, werre by peace, and so forthe in other thynges. And therto acordeth saynt Poule the Apostel in many places: he saith, ne yeld not harme for harme, ne wicked speche for wycked speche, but do wel to hem that don to the harme, and blesse them that sayd the harme. And in manye other places he amonisheth peace and acorde.

But nowe wol I speke of the counsayle, whych

whiche was yeue vnto you by men of lawe, and the wyse folke and olde folke, that sayde al by one accorde as ye herde byfore, that ouer al thynges ye shal done your beste and dylygence to kepe youre person, and to warneistore your house: And they sayd also, þ in thys case ye ought to werchen full wysely and with great deliberacion. And syr, as to the fyrste poynte, that toucheth the kepynge of your person: ye shall vnderstonde that he that hath werre, shal euer deuoutely and mekely prayen, byfore all thynges, that Jesu Christ of his mercy wol haue him in his protection, and to be his souerayne helper at his nede: For certes in this worlde there nys no wight that maye be counsayled and ykepte sufficiently without the kepynge of our lord Jesu Christ. To thys sentence acordeth the prophete Dauid that sayth: If god ne kepe the cyte, in vdel waketh he that it keepeth.

Nowe sir, than shulde he committe the kepynge of your person to youre true frendes, that ben approued and yknowe, and of hem shal ye aske helpe, your person to kepe. For Caton saith: If thou haue nede of helpe, aske it of thy frendes, for there nys none so good a physicien as thy true frende. And after this than shal ye kepe you fro al straunge folke, & fro lyers, and haue alway in suspecte her compayne. For Peter Alphons sayth. Ne take no company by the way of no straunge man, but yf so be that thou haste knowen hym of lenger tyme: And yf so be that he fal in to thy compayne, paraventure without thyn assent and good wyl, enquire than as subtelly as thou canst of his conuersacion, and of hys lyfe byfore, and fayne thy way, saueng thou woldest go thyder as thou wolte not go, and yf he beare a spere, hold the on the right syde of hym, and yf he beare a swerde, hold the on the lefte syde of hym. And than shal ye kepe you wysely from all maner of such people as I haue said you here byfore, and hem and her counsayle eschue. And after this than shal ye kepe you, in suche maner, that for anye presumpcion of your bodely strength, that ye dispyse not ne acounte not the might of your aduersary so lyte, that ye lete the kepyng of your person for your presumpcion, for euery wyse man dredeth his enemy. And Salomon saith: A very foole is he that of al hath drede: But certes be þ thorowe hardynesse of his herte, and through the hardynesse of him self, hath to great presumpcion, hym shall yuel betyde. Than shal ye euermore encountre warte embuchementes, and all espyale. For Seneca sayethe: The wyse man that dredeth harmes, escheweth harmes: he ne falleth in to no perylles, that peryll eschaweth. And al be it so that thou seme, þ thou be in secret place, yet shalt thou alway don dylygence in kepyng of thy person, this is to say, ne be not negligent to kepe thyne owne person, not onely for thy greatest enemy, but also for thy leste enemy. Wherefore sayth a man that is wel aduysed, he dredeth his leste enemye. Ouyde sayethe, that the lytel wesel wol slee the great bulle & the wylde herte. And the prouerbe sayethe, that a lytel thorne wol greue a kyng ful sore, and a lytel hounde wol holde the wylde boore. But nathelesse I say not thou shalt be so cowarde that thou doute where as is no drede. The boke sayethe, that some men haue great lust to discryue, but yet they drede to be discryued. And kepe the fro the compayne of shorners: for the boke sayth, with shorners ne make no compayne, but flye her wordes as venym.

¶ Nowe as to the seconde poynte, where as your wyse counsaylours counsayled you to warneistore youre house with great dylygence, I wolde fayne knowe howe ye vnderstode those wordes, & what is youre sentence.

Melibeus answerd and sayd, certes I vnderstonde it in this wyse, that I shal warneistore myn house with toures, suche as haue castels & other maner edyfices, and armure & archeries, bitwene which thynges I maye my person and my house so kepe and defende that myne enemyes shullen be in drede myne house to aproch. To this sentence answerde anon Prudence. Warnistyng þ the of hye toures & of hye edyfices, is with great costages and with great trauayle, and what that they ben accomplished, yet ben they not worth a strawe, but yf they ben defended with trewe frendes that ben olde and wyse. And vnderstondeth wel, that þ greatest and the strongest garnyson that ryche men maye haue, as wel to kepen her persone as her goodes is, þ they be beloued with her subiectes, and with her neyghbours. For thus sayethe Tullius, that there is a maner garnyson, that no man may venquisshe ne discomfyte, and that is a lorde to be beloued of his cytezyns, & of his people.

¶ Nowe

Nowe sir, as to the thyrde poynte, where as your olde and wyse counsaylours sayde, that ye ought not sodainly ne hastely procede in this nede; but that ye oughten purueyen and aparayle you in this ease, with great dylygence and delyberacion. Verily I trowe þ they sayde right trewly and ryght sothe. For Tullius sayth: In euery dede or thou begyn it apparayle the with great dyligence. Than say I, in vengeaunce takyng, in werre, in batayle, and in warnestorying, or thou begyn I rede that thou apparayle the therto, and do it with great delyberacio. For Tullius saith: The longe apparelynge to fore the batayle, maketh shoute victorie. And Cassidorus saith The garryson is stronger, whan it is longe tyme auysed. But nowe let vs speke of the counsayle that was acorded by your neyghbours, suche as don you reuerence without loue, your olde enemyes reconciled, your flat terers, that counsayled you certayne thynges priuely, and openly counsayled you the contrarye. The yong folke also, that counsayled you to venge you, & to make werre anon. Certes syr, as I haue sayde byfore, ye haue greatly erred to clepe suche maner of folke to youre counsayle, whiche counsaylours ben enoughe reproued by the resons a forsayd. But natheless let vs nowe discende to the special. Ye shul fyrste procede after the doctryne of Tullius. Certes the trouthe of thys mater or of thys counsayle, nedeth not dylygently to enquire, for it is wel wyste, which they ben that han done you this trespas and vilanye, and how many trespasours, and in what maner they haue done al thys wronge to you, and al this vilanye. And after thys, than shul ye examyne the seconde condicion, whiche Tullius addeth in thys mater. For Tullius putteth a thyng, whiche that he clepeth consentyng: this is to say, who ben they and whiche ben they, and howe manye, that assenten to thy counsayle in thy wylfulnesse, to done hasty vengeaunce. And let vs consyder also who ben they, and howe manye they ben that consented to youre aduersaries. As to the fyrst poynt, it is wel knowen whiche folke they be, that consented to your hasty wylfulnesse. For trewly al tho that counsayl you to maken sodayne werre, ne be not your frendes. Let se nowe whiche ben they that ye holden so greatly your frendes, as to your person For al be it so that ye be mighty & rich certes ye ben but alone: for trewly ye ne haue no chyld but a doughter, ne ye haue no brethern ne cosyns germayns, ne none other nye kynrede, wherfore your enemyes shuld synte to plede with you, ne to distroye your person.

Ye knowe also that youre rychesse mot be dispended in dyuers parties. And whā that euery wight hath his parte, they wollen take but lytell regarde to venge your dethe. But thyne enemyes ben thre, & they haue manye brethern, children, cosyns, & other nye kynred & though so were, that thou haddest slayne of hem two or thre, yet dwelleth ther ynowe to auenge her dethe, and to slee thy person. And though so be that your kynrede be more stedfaste and syker than the kyn of your aduersaryes, yet neuer the lesse your kynrede is but after kynrede, for they ben but lytel sybbe to you, and the kynne of your enemyes ben nye sybbe to hem. And certes as in that, her condicion is better than is yours. Than let vs consyder also of the counsaylynge of hem that counsayled you to take sodayne vengeaunce, whether it acorde to reson or non: And certes ye know wel nay for as by ryght and reson, there maye no man take vengeaunce of no wight, but the iuge that hath iurisdiction of it, whan it is graunted hym to take vengeaunce hastely or attemperatly as the lawe requireth. And yet more ouer of thylke worde that Tullius clepeth consentynge thou shalte consent, yf that thy might and thy power may consente and suffyse to thy wilfulnesse, and to thy counsaylours: And certes thou mayste wel saye nay, for sykerly as for to speke properly, we may do nothyng but suche thynge as we may done ryghtfully: and certes rightfully ye may take no vengeaunce, as of your own propre auctoute. Than maye ye se that youre power ne consenteth not ne accordeth not with your wylfulnesse. Nowe let vs examyne the thyrde poynt, that Tullius clepeth consequence. Thou shalte vnderstonde that the vengeaunce þ thou purposest for to take is consequent, and therof foloweth an other vengeaunce, peryl, and werre, and other damages withouten nombre, of whiche we be not ware, as at this tyme. And as touchynge the fourth poynte, þ Tullius clepeth engendring, thou shalte consyder that this wrong, whiche that is done to the, is engendred of þ

hate of

hate of thyne enemyes, and of ꝑ vengeaunce takyng vpon hem, that wolde engender a nother vengeaunce, and moche sorowe & wastyng of rychesse, as I sayde ere. Nowe sir, as touchyng the fyfte poynte, that Tully sheweth causes, whiche is the laste poynte, thou shalte vnderstonde, that the wronge that thou haste receyued, hathe certayne causes, whiche that clerkes callen outen, and efficien, and causa longinqua, and causa propinqua, that is to saye, the ferre cause, and the nyghe cause. The ferre cause is almyghty God, that is cause of al thynges. The nere cause is the thre enemyes. The cause accidental was hate. The cause material, ben the fyue woundes of thy doughter. The cause formal, is the maner of theyr werkynge that brought ladders, and clambe in at thy wyndowes. The cause fynal was for to sle thy doughter if let ted not in as moche as in them was. But for to speke of ꝑ ferre cause, as to what ende they shulde come, or fynally what shal betyde of them in thys case, ne canne I not deme, but by conjectynge and supposynge: for we shall suppose that they shall come to a wycked ende, bycause that the boke of decrees sayethe. Welde or wyth grete payne, ben causes brought to a good ende, whan they ben badly begonne.

Now sir, yf men wolde aske me why that god suffred men to do you this villanye, truly I can not wel answere, as for no sothfastnesse. For the Apostel sayethe, that the sayences and the iugementes of our lorde God almighty ben ful depe, there may no man comprehende ne serche hem. Nathelesse by certayne presumpcyons and conjectynges, I holde and byleue, that God whyche that is ful of mekyne and of rightwysnesse, hathe suffred thys betyde, by iuste cause resonable.

¶ Thy name is Melibee, this is to saye, a man that drinketh hony. Thou haste dronke so moche hony of swete temporel rychesses, and delyces of honours of this worlde, that thou arte dronke, and haste forgoten Jesu Christ thy creatour: Thou ne haste not done to hym suche honoure and reuerence as thou ought, ne thou ne haste not taken kepe to the wordes of Dauid, that sayth. Vnder ꝑ hony of the goodes of thy body, is hyd the venym that sleeth thy soule.

And Salomon sayth: If it so be that thou haste founde hony, ete of the same hony, that that suffyseth: For yf so be that thou ete of ꝑ same hony out of mesure, thou shalte spewe, and also be nedy and poore. And paraunture almyghty God Jesu Christ, hath thee in dispyte, and hathe turned awaye fro the hys face, and his eeres of mysericorde & mercye. And also he hath suffred & gyue lycence, that thou thus shuldest be punished & chastised in ꝑ maner that thou haste trespased and offended. Thou hast done synne agayns our lorde Christ, for certes the thre enemyes of mankynde, that is to say: the flesche, the fende, and the worlde, thou haste suffred hem entre into thyne herte wylfully, by the wyndowes of thy body, and hast not defended thy self fully enemyes agayns their assautes & their temptacions, so that they haue wounded thy soule in fyue places, this is to say: The deedly synnes that ben entred in to thy hert by thy fyue wyttes. And in the same maner oure lorde Christ hathe wolde and suffred that thy thre enemyes be entred in to thy house by ꝑ wyndowes, and haue wounded thy doughter in the forsayd maner.

Truely ꝙ Melibee I se well that ye enforce you moche by wordes to ouercome me, in suche maner that I shall not benge me a mys enemyes, shewynge me the perilles and the yuels that myght fal of this vengeaunce but who so wolde consyder in al vengeances, the perils and yuels that myght fal of vengeaunce takyng, a man wolde neuer take vengeaunce, and that were harme: For by ꝑ vengeaunce takynge, ben the wycked men deserued from the good men. And they that haue wyll to do wickednesse, restrayn them wycked purpose, whan they se the punishyng and chastysyng of ꝑ trespasours. And yet sir I more, that ryght as a synguler person sueth in takynge vengeaunce of a nother man, ryght so symyth the iuge, yf he do no vengeaunce of hem that haue deserued. For Senek sayth thus: That mayster he sayth is good that preueth thieues. And as Catyon sayth: A man dredeth to do outrages, whan he wot and knoweth, that it displeaseth to the iuges & souerayns. And an other sayth: The iuge that dredeth to do ryght maketh men shrewes. And sayn Poule the Apostle sayth in hys Epystle, whan he writeth vnto the Romayns, that the iuges beare not the spere

the speere wythout cause, but they beare it to punyshe the shrewes & mysdoers, & for to defende the good men. ¶ yf ye woll then take vengeaunce of your enemies, ye shul returne and haue your recourse to the iuge that hath the iurisdyction vpon hem, and he shall punyshe hem, as the lawe asketh and requyreth

A ha, sayd Melibee, thys vengeaunce lyketh me nothynge. I bethynke me nowe, and take hede howe that fortune hathe nourysshed me fro my childhode, and hath holpe me to passe many a stronge paas: Nowe I woll assaye her, trowynge wyth goddes helpe, that she shall helpe me my shame for to auenge.

TRuely sayd Prudence, yf ye wol werke by my counsayle, ye shal not assay for tune by no waye: ne ye shall not lene ne bowe vnto her, after the worde of Seneke For thynges that bene foolyshlye done, and that bene done in hope of fortune, shal neuer come to good ende. And as the same Seneke sayeth: The more clere & the more shynynge that fortune is, the more brytel and the soner broke she is. Trusteth not in her, for she is not stedfast ne stable. For when thou trowest to be moste sure and stedfaste of her helpe, she woll fayle and deceyue the. And where as ye saye, that fortune hath nourysshed you fro youre childhode, I saye that in so moche ye shall the lesse trusste in her, and in her wytte. For Seneke sayeth: what man that is nourysshed by fortune, she maketh hym a great foole Nowe then syth ye desyre and aske vengeaunce and the vengeaunce that is done after the lawe and before the iuge, ne lyketh you not and the vengeaunce that is done in hope of fortune is perylious & vncertaine, then haue ye none other remedye, but for to haue your recourse vnto the souerayne iuge, that vengeth all vylanyes and wronges. And he shal venge you, after that hym selfe wytnesseth, where as he sayeth: Leaue the vengeaunce to me, and I shall do it.

Melibee answered, yf I ne venge me of the villany that men haue done to me, I shal make other men warne hem, that haue done to me that vylanye, and al other for to do me an other vylanye. For it is wrytten: yf thou take no vengeaunce of an olde vyllany, thou shalt make thyne aduersaryes to do the a newe vyllany: And also for my sufferaunce men wolde do me so moche vyllany, that I myght neither bere it ne sustayne it, and so shulde I be put & holden ouer lowe. For men sayne, in mykel suffryng shal many thynges fal vnto the, which thou shalt not mowe suffre.

Certes (q Prudence) I graunt you, that ouer moch sufferaunce is not good, but yet ne foloweth it not therof, that euery persone, to whome men do vyllanye shulde take of it vengeaunce: for that appertayneth and longeth all only to iuges, for they shulde venge ỹ vylanyes and iniuryes: And therfore those two authorytees that ye haue sayd afore, bene only vnderstande in the iuges: For when they suffre ouer moche the wronges and vyllanyes to be done, wythout punyshment, they somon not a man all only for to do newe wronges, but they comaunde it. Also a wyse man sayeth, that the iuge that correcteth not ỹ synner, comaundeth and byddeth hym do synne. And ỹ iuges and souerayns, myght in theyr lande so moch suffre of the shrewes & mysdoers that they shulde by such sufferaunce, by processe of tyme, were of such power and myght that they shulde put out the iuges and the souerayns fro theyr places, and al to-breke hem lese her lordshyppes.

But let vs now suppose, that ye haue lene to venge you: I saye ye be not of myght and power as nowe to venge you, for yf ye woll make comparyson vnto the myght of youre aduersaryes, ye shulde fynde in many thynges that I haue shewed you er thys, ỹ theyr condycyon is better then yours, and therfore saye I, that it is good as nowe, that ye suffre and be pacient.

Furthermore, ye knowe well that after the comen sawe, it is a woodnesse, a man to stryue wyth a stronger or a more mighty man then he is hym selfe, and for to stryue wyth a man of euen strength, that is to saye, wyth as stronge a man as he is, it is peryl: and for to stryue wyth a weaker man it is folye, and therfore shulde a man flye stryuynge as mykel as he myght. For Salomon sayeth: It is a great worshyppe to a man to kepe hym fro norse & stryfe: and yf it so befal & happe that a man of greater myght & strength then thou arte, do the greuaunce: study and besye the rather to stylle the same greuaunce, then for to venge the. For Seneke sayeth, that he putteth hym in great peryll, that stryueth wyth

a greater man than he is hem selfe. And Caton sayth, yf a man of hygher astate or degre or more mighty than thou, do the anoye or greuaunce, suffre hym: for he that ones hath greued the, maye an other tyme releue the and helpe the. Yet sette I case ye haue lycence for to benge you. I saye that there ben ful many thynges, that shal restrayne you of benge aunce takyng, and make you for to enclyne to suffre, and for to haue pacience in the wronges that haue ben done to you. Fyrst and formest yf ye wol consyder the fautes that ben in your owne person, for whyche fautes god hath suffred you to haue this trybulacion, as I haue sayd to you here before. For the poete sayth, that we ought pacyently take the trybulacions that come to vs, whan that we thynke and consyder that we haue deserued to haue them. And saynt Gregorie sayth, that whan a man consydereth wel the nombre of hys defautes and of hys synnes, the payues and the trybulacions that he suffreth seme the lesse vnto hym. And in as moche as him thynketh his synnes more heuy and greuous, in so moche semeth his payne the lyghter and the eyser vnto him. Also ye owe to enclyne and bowe your herte to take the pacience of our lorde Jesu Christ, as sayth saynt Peter in his epystles. Jesu Christ he sayth hath suffred for vs, and yeuen ensample to euerye man to folowe and sewe hym, for he dyd neuer synne, ne neuer came there a vilayn nous worde out of hys mouthe. Whan men cursed hym, he cursed hem not. And whan men bete hym, he manaced hem not. Also the great pacience, whyche sayntes that ben in paradyse haue had in tribulacyon that they haue suffred, wythout her deserte or gylte, ought moche styre you to pacience. Furthermore, ye shul enforce you to haue pacience, consydryng that the trybulacions of thys world but lytel whyle endure, and sone passed ben and gon, and þ ioy that a man seketh to haue by pacience in tribulacions is perdurable, after that the Apostle sayth in his Epystle. The ioye of god he sayth, is perdurable, that is to saye, euerlastyng. Also troweth and beleueth stedfastly that he is not wel nourished and wel taught, that can not haue pacience, or wol not receyue pacyence. For Salomon sayth, that the doctryne and the wytte of a man is knowen by pacience. And in an other place he sayth, that he that is pacient, gouerneth hym by great prudence.

And the same Salomon sayth. The angry and wrathful man maketh noyses, and the pacient má attempreth and stylleth hem. He sayth also, it is more worth to be pacient than to be ryght stronge. And he that maye haue the lordeship of his owne herte is more to prayse, thá he that by his force or strength taketh great cyties. And therfore sayth saynt Jame in hys epystle that pacyence is a great bertue of perfectyon.



Certes (q Melibee) I graunt you dame Prudence, that pacience is a great bertue of perfection, but euerye man maye not haue the perfection that ye seke, ne I am not of the nombre of ryght perfyte men. For myn herte may neuer be in peace, vnto the tyme it be auenged. And al be it so that it was great peryl to myne enemyes to do me a vilanye, in takyng vengeaunce vpon me, yet take they no hede of the peryl, but fulfylled her wycked wyl a her corage: And therfore me thynketh men ought not repreue me, though I put me in a lytel peryl for to auenge me, sythen I do a great excesse, that is to saye: that I benge me outrage by an other.

¶ Ah q dame Prudence, ye say your wyl as you lyketh: But in no case of the worlde a man shulde not do outrage ne excesse for to benge him. For Casiodor sayth, that as vnl dothe he that vengeth him by outrage, as he that dothe the outrage. And therfore ye shal benge you after the order of right, that is to saye, by the lawe, and not by excesse ne by outrage. And also yf you wol benge you of the outrage of your aduersaries in other manner than right commaundeth, ye synne. And therfore sayth Seneke: that a man shal neuer benge shrewdnesse by shrewdnesse. And yf ye saye that right asketh to defende violence by violence, and fightyng by fightyng: certes ye saye soth, whan the defence is done without intervall, or without tarryeng or delay, for to defende hym, and not for to benge hym. And it behoueth that a man put suche attemperaunce in his defence, that mé haue no cause ne matere to repreue him þ defendeth hym of

outrage

outrage and exceſſe, for els were it agayne re
ſon. Parde ye knowe wel, that ye make no de
fence as nowe, for to defende you, but for to
venge you: and ſo ſheweth it that ye haue no
will to do your dede attemperatly, and ther
fore me thynketh that pacience is good.
For Salomon ſayeth, that he that is not pa
cient ſhall haue great harme.

Certes ſayd Melibee I graūt you, that when a mā is impa
cient & wroth of that that toucheth him not, and that apper
taineth not vnto him, though it harme hym it is no wonder
for the lawe ſayth, that he is culpable, that entremetteth or
meteth wyth ſuche thynges as apertayneth not vnto hym. And Salomō
ſayeth that he that entremetteth of the noyſe or ſtryfe of another man, is lyke to hym that
taketh a ſtraunge houde by the eeres: For
ryght as he that taketh a ſtrauge houde by ꝑ
eres is other whyle byttē by ꝑ houde, right
ſo in the ſame wyſe it is reaſon that he haue
harme that by hys impacience medleth hym
of the noyſe of an other man, where as it ap
pertayneth not vnto hym. But ye knowe wel
that thys dede that is to ſaye my grefe & my
diſeaſe toucheth me ryght nyghe. And ther
fore though I be wrothe and impacient it is
no maruayle: and ſauynge youre grace I can
not ſe ꝙ it myght greatly harme me thoughe
I toke vengeaunce, for I am rycher & more
myghtye then myne enemyes be: And well
knowe ye that by money & by hauynge great
poſſeſſyons, ben all thynges of thys worlde
gouerned. And Salomō ſayeth, al theſe thyn
ges obey to money.

When Prudence had herde her huſbande
maunt hym of hys rycheſſe and hys money,
diſpraiſynge ꝑ power of hys aduerſaryes,
ſhe ſpake and ſayd in thys wyſe. Certes dere
ſyr, I graunt you that ye be ryche & myghty,
and that ꝑ rycheſſe is good to hem that haue
well gotten hem, and that well can vſe hem.
For ryght as the body of a man may not lyue
wythout the ſoule, no more may it lyue with
out the temporel goodes, and by ryches may
a man get hym great frendes. And therfore
ſayeth Pamphilius: yf a nerthes doughter
be ſayth be riche, ſhe may chefe of a thouſand
men, whyche ſhe woll take to her huſbande:
for of a thouſande, one woll not forſake her
ne refuſe her. And thys Pamphilius ſayeth
alſo: yf thou be ryght happy, that is to ſay,
yf thou be ryche, thou ſhalte fynde a greate
nombre of felowes & frendes. And yf thy for
tune chaūge, farewel frendſhyp, & felowſhyp
for thou ſhalte be alone wythout any cōpany
but yf it be the companye of poore folke.
And yet ſayeth thys Pamphilius more ouer
that they that bene bonde and thrall of lyn
nage, ſhall be made worthye and noble by
the rycheſſes. And ryghte ſo as by the ry
cheſſes there come many goodneſſes, ryghte
ſo by pouertie come there many harmes and
yuels, for greate pouertie cōſtrayneth a man
to do many yuels. And therfore calleth Caſ
ſiod or pouertye the mother of ruyne, that is
to ſaye, the mother of ouerthrowynge or of
fallynge downe. And therfore ſayeth Peter
Alfonce: One of the greateſt aduerſyties of
thys worlde is when a free man by kynde or
of byrth, is conſtrayned by pouerty to eat the
almeſſe of hys enemye. And the ſame ſayeth
Innocent in one of hys bokes: He ſayeth,
that ſorowfull and myſhappy is the condi
on of a poore begger, for yf he aſke not hys
meate, he dyeth for honger, and yf he aſke, he
dyeth for ſhame: and algates neceſſite con
ſtrayneth hym to aſke. And therfore ſayeth
Salomon, that better is to dye, then for to
haue ſuche pouerte. And as the ſame Salo
mon ſayeth: Better it is to dye of bytter deth,
then for to lyue in ſuche wyſe. By theſe rea
ſons that I haue ſaid vnto you, & by many o
ther reaſons that I couldē ſay, I graunt you
that rycheſſes ben good to hem ꝑ getten hem
well and to hem that well vſen the rycheſſes.
And therfore wol I ſhewe you howe ye ſhal
behaue you in gatheryngē of rycheſſes, and
in what maner ye ſhullen vſe hem.

Fyrſt ye ſhall get hem wythout great de
ſyre, by good leyſer; ſokyngly and not ouer
haſtely, for a man that is to deſyrynge to get
rycheſſe, habandoneth hym ſelfe to thefte
and to all other yuels. And therfore ſayeth
Salomon: He that haſteth hym to beely to
ware ryche, he ſhall be none innocent. He ſay
eth alſo, that the rycheſſe that haſtely cometh
to a man, ſone and lyghtly goeth and paſſeth
from a man, but that rycheſſe that cometh ly
tel & lytel, wexeth alwaye and multiplyeth.
And fyr, ye ſhall gette rycheſſe by youre wyte

and by your trauayle, vnto your profyte, and that without wronge or harme doynge to any other persone. For the lawe sayeth, there maketh no mā him selfe riche, yf he do harme to an other wyght, this is to say: that nature defendeth and forbyddeth by ryghte, that no man make hym selfe ryche vnto the harme of an other person. And Tullius sayeth, that no sorowe ne no drede of death, ne nothing that maye fall vnto a man, is so moche ayenst nature, as a man to encrease hys owne profyte, to the harme of an other mā. And though the great & myghty mē get rychelles more lyghtly then thou, yet shalte thou not be ydell ne slowe to do thy profyte, for thou shalte in all wyse flye ydelnesse. For Salomon sayeth, þ ydelnesse teacheth a man to do many vices. And the same Salomon sayeth, that he that trauayleth and beseyeth hym to tyth his lāde shall eate breed: but he that is ydell & casteth hym to no besynesse ne occupacion, shal fal in to pouerte and dye for honger. And he that is ydell and slowe, can neuer fynde conuenable tyme for to do hys profyte. For there is a wet syluer sayeth, that the ydel man accuseth hym in wynter, because of the greate colde, and in sommer because of the heete. For these causes sayeth Caton, waketh and enclyne you not ouer moche for to slepe, for ouer moche reste nourysheth and causeth many vyces. And therfore sayeth saynt Jerom, do some good dedes, that the deuell whyche is our enemye, ne fynde you not vnoccupyed, for the dyuel ne taketh not lyghtly vnto his werkynge suche as he fyndeth occupyed in good werkes.

Then thus in gettynge rychelles ye must flye ydelnesse. And afterward ye shul vse the rychelles, whyche ye haue gote by your wyte and by youre trauayle, in suche maner, that men holde you not to scarce ne to sparyng, ne foole large, that is to say, ouer large a spender For ryghte as men blame an auaricious mā because of hys scarcite and chynchery, in the same wyse is he to blame that spendeth ouer largelye. And therfore sayeth Caton: Vse (sayeth he) the rychelles that thou haste gotten in suche maner, that men maye haue no mater ne cause to call the nother wretche ne chynche: For it is greate shame to a man to haue a poore herte and a ryche purse. He sayeth also, the goodes that thou haste gote, vse them by measure, that is to saye, spende measurably, for they that foolysshly waste and dyspende the goodes that they haue, when they haue no more proue of her stone, then they shape hem to take þ goodes of an other man. I saye then that ye shall flye auarice, dysynge youre rychelle in suche maner, that men saye not that youre rychelles bene buryed, but that ye haue hem in your myghte and in youre weldynge. For a wyse man repreueth the auaricyous man, and sayeth thus in thys verses two. Wherto and why burieth a man hys goodes by hys great auarice, and knoweth well that nedes he muste dye, for death is the ende of euerye man, as in thys presente lyfe? And for what cause or encheson loyneth he hym, or knyteth he hym so faste vnto hys goodes, that all hys wyttes mowe not dyscuer hym, ne departe hym fro hys goodes, and knoweth well, or ought to knowe, that when he is deade, he shall no thynge beare wyth hym out of thys worlde. And therfore sayeth saynt Augustyne, that the auaricyous mā is lykened vnto hell that the more it swalowyth, the more desyre it hathe to swalowe and deuoure. And as well as ye wolde eschewe to be called an auaricyous man or chynche, as well shulde ye kepe and gouerne you in such a wyse, that men call you not foole large. Therfore sayeth Tullius. The goodes of thyne house ne shulde not be hydde ne kepte so close, but that they myghte be opened by ryte and bonayte, that is to saye, to yeue hem parte that haue greate nede. Ne thy goodes shulde not be so open, to be euerye mans goodes. Afterwarde in gettynge of youre rychelles and in dysynge hem, ye shall alwaye haue thre thynges in youre herte, that is to say, our Lorde God, conscience, and good name. Fyrst ye shall haue god in your herte, and for no ryches ye shuld do any thyng, whych may in any maner displeasse god your creatour & maker. For after the worde of Salomon it is better to haue a lytell good with þ loue of god, then to haue moche good and treasoure, and lese the loue of his Lorde God. And the prophete sayeth, that better it is to be a good man, and haue lytel good & treasour, then to be holden a shrewe, and haue great rychesse. And yet I say furthermore, that ye shulde alwaye do your busynesse to get you rychelles, so that

to that ye get hem with good conſcience. And the Apoſtle ſayeth, that there nys thynge in this worlde, of whyche we ſhulde haue ſo great ioye, as when oure conſcience bearyth vs good wytneſſe. And the wyſe man ſayeth: that the ſubſtaunce of a man is full good, when synne is not in mans conſcience. Afterwarde in gettyng of your rychelles and in kepyng of hem, ye muſte haue great beſyneſſe and great diligence, that your good name be alwaye kept and conſerued. For Salomon ſayeth, that better it is, and more it auayleth a man to haue a good name, then for to haue many rychelles: And therfore he ſayeth in an other place. Do great diligence ſayeth Salomon, in kepynge of thy frendes & of thy good name, for it ſhall lenger abyde wyth the thē any treaſure, be it neuer ſo precious. And certes he ſhuld not be called a great gentylman, that after God and good conſcience, all thynges lefte, ne doth hys deligence & beſyneſſe to kepe hys good name. And Catho ſayeth, that it is a ſygne of a gentyll herte, when a mā loueth and deſyreth to haue a good name. And therfore ſayeth ſayncte Auguſtyne, that there ben two thynges that ben right neceſſarye and alſo nedefull: and that is good conſcience, and good loſe, that is to ſaye: good cōſcience to thyne owne perſone inwarde, and good loſe for thy neyghbour outwarde. And he that truſteth hym ſomuch in hys good cōſcience, that he deſpyſeth & ſetteth at nought hys good name or looſe, & recketh not though he kepe not hys good name, nys but a cruell churle. Syr, nowe haue I ſhewed you howe ye ſhulde do in gettynge rychelles, and howe ye ſhulde vſe hem: and I ſe well for the truſt that ye haue in your rychelles, ye woll moue warre and batayle. I counſayle you that ye begyn no warre in truſte of youre rychelles, for they ne ſuffyſe not warres to mayntene. And therfore ſayeth a philoſopher: That mā that deſyreth and wolde algates haue warre ſhall neuer haue ſuffyſaunce: for the rycher that he is, the greater deſpēces muſt he make yf he woll haue worſhyppe and victorye.

And Salomon ſayeth, that the greater rychelles y a man hath, the more deſpendours he hath. And therfore syr, all be it ſo that for youre ryches ye maye haue moche folke, yet beſeemeth it not, ne it is not good to begynne warre, where as ye maye in other maner haue peace, vnto youre worſhyppe and profyte: For the victorye of batayls that bene in this worlde, lyeth not in great nombre or multytude of people, ne in the vertue of mā, but it lyeth in the wyll and in the hande of oure Lorde God almyghtye. And therfore Judas Machabeus, whyche was goddes knyght, when he ſhulde fyght ayenſt hys aduerſarye, that hadde a greater nombre and a greater multytude of folke, and ſtrōger then was hys people of Machabee, yet he recomforted hys lytell company, and ſayd right in thys wyſe: Alſo lyghtly ſayd he, maye our Lorde God yeue victorye to a fewe folke, as to many folke, for the victorye of a batayle cometh not by the greate nombre of people, but it cōmeth from oure Lorde God of heauen. And dere ſyr, for as moche as there is no man certayne, yf it be worthye that God yeue hym victorye or not, after that Salomon ſayeth, therfore euery man ſhuld greatly drede warres to begyn: and bycauſe that in batayles fall many perils, and happeth other whyle, that as ſone is the greate man ſlayne as the lytel man. And as it is wrytten in the ſeconde boke of kynges: The dedes of batayles ben aduenturous and not'hyng certayne, for as lyghtly is one hurte wyth a ſpeere as an other: And for ther is great peryll in warre, therfore ſhulde a man dyſe and eſchue warre in as moche as a man may goodly. For Salomō ſayeth, he that loueth peryl, ſhall fall in peryll.

After that dame Prudence had ſpoken in thys maner, Melibe anſwered and ſayd. I ſe well dame Prudence, that by your fayre wordes and your reſons that ye haue ſhewed me that the warre lyketh you nothynge, but I haue not yet herde youre counſayle howe I ſhall do in thys nede.

Certes ſaid ſhe) I cōſayle you that ye accorde wyth your aduerſaries, & that ye haue peace wyth hem. For ſaynt James ſayeth in hys Epyſtle: that by concorde and peace ſmall ryches ware great: and by debate and diſcorde ryches decaye. And ye knowe well, that one of the greateſt and moſte ſouerayne thyng that is in this worlde is vnite & peace. And therfore ſayeth oure lorde Jeſu Chriſte to hys apoſtles in thys wyſe: wel happy ben they, that loue & purchace peace, for they be called the chyldren of god. Thā ſayd Melibee,

now se I wel, that ye lone not myne honour ne my worshyp. Ye knowe wel that myne aduersaryes haue begon this debate & bigge by theyr outrage. And ye se well that they ne requyre ne praye me of peace, ne they aske not to be reconsiled. Wol ye then that I go make me, and obey me to them, & crye hem mercye? For soth ȳ were not my worshyp. For ryghte as men saye, ouer great humblenesse engendreth dyspraysynge, so fareth it by to greate humilite or mekenesse.

Then began dame Prudence to make semblaunt of wrath, & sayd: Certes syr, saue your grace. I loue your honour and profyte as I do myne owne, and euer haue do: ye ne none other neuer se the cõtrary. And yet, yf I had sayd, that ye shulde haue purchased peace and reconsiliation, I ne had moche myssaye me, ne sayd amysse. For the wyse man sayeth: the dyscention begynneth by an other man, and the reconsilynge begynneth by thy selfe. And the prophete sayeth: flye shrewdnesse, and do goodnesse, seke peace & folowe it, in as moch as in the is. Yet saye I not, that ye shulde rather pursue to youre aduersaries for peace, then they shulde to you: For I knowe well that ye bene so harde herted, that ye woll do nothynge for me. And Salomon sayeth: He that hath ouer harde an herte, he at laste shal myshappe or mysbetyde.

When Melibee had herde dame Prudence make semblaunt of wrathe, he sayde in thys wyse. Dame I praye you, that ye be not displeased of ȳ thynge that I saye, for ye knowe well that I am angrye and wroth, & that is no wonder: and they that be wrothe wote not well what they do, ne what they saye. Therfore the prophete sayeth: that troubled eyen haue no clere syght. But saye & cõsayle me as you lyketh, for I am ready to do ryght as ye wol desyre: And yf ye repreue me of my folye, I am the more holden to loue & prayse you. For Salomõ sayeth, that he that repreueth hym that doth foly, he shall fynde greater grace then he that desyreth him by swete wordes.

Then sayde dame Prudence, I make no semblaunt of wrath ne of anger, but for your great profyte. For Salomon sayeth: He is more worth, that repreueth or chydeth a fole for hys folye, shewynge hym semblaunt of wrath, then he that supporteth him and prayseth hym in hys myssayenge, and laugheth at hys folye. And thys same Salomon sayeth afterwarde: That by the sorowfull vysage of a man, that is to saye, by the sorye and heuy countenaunce of a man, the foole correcteth and amendeth hymselfe.

Then sayde Melibee, I shall not consente vnto so many fayre reasons as ye put to me and shewe: saye shortly your wyl and yours counsayle, and I am all readye to performe and fulfyll it. Then dame Prudence discouered all her wyll vnto hym and sayde, I counsayle you (sayd she) aboue al thynges, that ye make peace betweene God and you, and be reconsyled vnto hym and to hys grace. For as I haue sayd you here before, god hath suffred you to haue thys tribulacion and disease for your synnes: and yf ye do as I saye you, God wyl sende youre aduersaryes vnto you, and make hem fall at your fete, ready to do youre wyll and your commaundement. For Salomon sayeth, when the condicion of man is pleasaũt and lykynge to god, he chaungeth the hertes of the mans aduersaries, and constrayneth hem to beseche hym of peace & of grace. And I praye you let me speke with your aduersaryes priuely, for they shal not knowe that it be of your wyll or your assent. And then when I knowe theyr wyll and theyr entente, I maye counsayle you the more surely.

Dame sayde Melibee, dothe youre wyll and your lykynge, for I put me holy in your disposicion and ordynaunce.

Then dame Prudence, when she sawe the good wyll of her husbonde, delybered & tooke aduyse in her selfe, thynkyng how she myght bringe thys nede vnto a good conclusion and to a good ende: And when she sawe her tyme, she sente for these aduersaries to come vnto her in a priue place. And shewed wisely vnto hem ȳ great goodes that come of peace and the greate harmes and perils that bene in warre, and sayd to hem in a goodly maner howe that hem ought haue great repentaũce of the iniury and wronge, that they had done to Melibeus her lorde, and vnto her and to her doughter.

And when they herde ȳ goodly wordes of dame Prudence, they were so supprysed and rauysshed, and had so great ioye of her, that wonder was to tel. Ah, ladye (sayde they)

ye haue

ye haue shewed vnto vs the blessyng of swetnesse after the sayeng of Dauid the prophete, for the accomplysshyng whych we be nat worthy to haue in no maner. But we ought require it with great contrition and humilite, that ye of your goodnesse haue presented vnto vs. Now is me wel, that the science and conyng of Salomon is ful trewe, for he saith: That swete wordes multiply and encrease frendes, and maketh shrewes to be debonaire and mete.

Certes (sayd they) we put our dede and al our mater in cause, al holy in your goodwyl, and been redy to obey at the comaundement of oure lorde Melibeus. And therfore dere and benygne lady: we praye and beseche you as meekly as we can and maye, that it lyke vnto your great goodnesse, to fulfyll in dede, your goodly wordes. For we consyder and knowe, that we haue offended and greued oure lorde Melibeus out of measure: so forfayth, that we be nat of power to make hym amendes. And therfore we oblige and bynde vs and our frendes, for to do all at hys wyll and comaundement: but paraventure he hath suche heuynesse, and suche wreche to vs warde, because of our offence, that he will enoyn vs suche a payne, as we mowe nat beare ne sustayne. And therfore noble lady, we beseech your womanly pyte, to take suche aduysement in thys nede, that we ne our frendes be nat disherited ne destroyed, through our folye.

Certes (sayd Prudence) It is an harde thynge and ryght perilous, that a man put hym al vtterly in arbytration and iugement, and in the might and power of hys enemye: For Salomon sayth: Leueth me, and yeueth credence to that I shal saye: Ne yeueth neuer the power ne gouernaunce of thy goodes, to thy son, to thy wyfe, to thy frende, ne to thy brother: ne yeue thou neuer might ne maistry ouer thy body whyle thou liuest. Nowe, syth he defendeth that a man shulde nat yeue to his brother ne to hes frende, the might of his body. By a stronger reason he defendeth and forbedeth a man to yeue hym selfe to his enemy. And natheless I counsayle you that ye mystrust nat my lorde: for I wot wel and know verily, that he is debonair and meke, large, curteys, and nothynge desirous ne coueytous of goodes ne ryches. For there is nothynge in this worlde that he desyreth, saue onely worshyp and honoure. Furthermore I knowe, and am ryght sure, that he shal nothyng do in thys nede, without my counsayle: and I shall so worke in thys case, that by the grace of our lorde god, ye shalbe reconsyled vnto vs.

Than sayd they with one voyce, worshypful lady we put vs and oure goodes all fully in your wyl and disposycion, and ben redy to come, what day that it lyketh vnto your noblesse to lymyte vs or assyne vs for to make our obligacion a bonde as stronge as it lyketh vnto your goodnes, that we mowe fulfyl the wyl of you and of my lorde Melibe.

Whan dame Prudence had herde the answere of these men, she bad hem go ayen priuely, and she returned to her lorde Melibe, and tolde hym howe she founde hys aduersaries ful repentaunt, knowlegynge ful lowly her synnes and trespas, and how they were redy to suffre al payne, requiryng and prayeng him of mercy and pyte.

Than sayde Melibe, he is wel worthy to haue pardon and forgyuenesse of hys synne, that excuseth not hys synne, but knowlegeth and repenteth hym, askyng indulgence. For Seneke sayth, there is the remission and forgyuenesse, where as the confessyon is: for confessyon is neyghbour to innocence. And therfore I assent and conforme me to haue peace, but it is good that we doonought without the assente and wyl of our frendes.

Than was Prudence ryght gladde and ioyful, and sayde: Certes sir, ye haue wel and goodly answered: for ryght as by the counsayle, assent, and helpe of your frendes, ye haue be stered to venge you and make warre: Right so, without her counsayle shall ye not accorde you, ne haue peace with your aduersaries. For the lawe sayth: There is nothyng so good, by waye of kynde, as a thyng to be vnbounde by him that it was ybounde.

Than dame Prudence, wythout delay or taryenge, sent anone her messanger for her kynsfolke and her olde frendes, whyche that were trewe and wise: and told hem by order, in the presence of Melibe, al the mater, as it is aboue expressed and declared. And prayed hem that they wolde saye their aduyse and counsayle what best were to do in this nede. And whan Melibeus frendes had taken her

aduyse and delyberacion of the forsayd mater, and had trauayled it by great busynesse and dilygence. They putte ful couenable for to have peace and rest, and that Melibee shulde receyue vs with good hert hys aduersaries, to forgyuenesse and mercy.

And whan dame Prudence had herd that sent of her lorde Melibee, and the counsayle of hys frendes accorde with her wyl and her entencion, she was wonderly gladde in her hert, and sayde. There is an olde prouerbe (sayd she) That ye goodnesse that thou mayst do this day, do it, and abyde it not, ne delay it not tyl the next daye. And therfore I counsayle, that ye sende your messengers, suche as be discrete and wyse, vnto your aduersaries: tellyng hem on your behalf, that yf they wol treat of peace and accorde, that they shape hem wyth out delay or tarying to come vnto vs: whyche thyng performed was in dede. And whan these trespasours, and repentyng folke of her folies, that is to say, the aduersaries of Melibeus, had herde what these messengers sayd vnto hem, they were ryght gladde and ioyful, and answered ful meekely and benygnely, yeldyng grace and thankes to her lorde Melibee, and to al hys compayne: and chose hem without delaye to go wyth the messangers, and obeyed to the commaundement of her lorde Melibeus. And ryght anone they toke her way to the court of Melibe, & toke with hem some of their true frendes, to make fayth for hem, & for to be her borowes: And whā they were comen to the presence of Melibee, he sayd to hem these wordes. It stondeth thus, sayde Melibee, and soth it is, that causelesse & without skyl and reson, ye have done great iniuries and wronges to me and my wyfe Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye have entred in to my house by violence and haue done suche outrage, that all men knowe wel that ye haue deserued dethe. And therfore woll I knowe and wete of you, whether ye woll put the punishynge and the chastysyng and the vengeaunce of thys outrage, in the wyl of me and of my wyfe, or ye wol not.

Than the wyseste of hem tho answerd for hem al, and sayd. Sir, sayd he, we know wel that we ben vnworthy to come to the court of so great a lorde and so worthy as ye be, for we haue so gretly mistaken vs, and haue offended and agylted in suche wyse agayn your hygh lordshyp, that truely we haue deserued the dethe, but yet for the grete goodnesse and debonaire, that al the worlde witnesseth of your person, we submyte vs to your correccion and benygnyte of your gracious lordshyp, and ben redy to obey to al your commaundements, beseechynge you, that of your mercy ye wol conseyder our grete repentaunce, and lowe submyssyon, and graunte vs forgyuenesse of our outrageous trespace and offence: For wel we knowe, that your liberal grace and mercye stretcheth fertherer in to the goodnesse, than don our outrageous gyltes and trespaces in to the wyckednesse. Al be it that cursedly and dampnably we haue agylted agayns your hygh lordshyp.

Than Melibee tooke hem vp fro the grounde ful benygnely, and receyued her obligacions and her bondes by her othes vpon her pledges and borowes, and assyned hem a certayne day to retourne vnto hys courte, for to receyue and accept the sentence and iugement that Melibeus wolde commaunde to be don on hem by the causes aforesayd, which thynges ordayned, euery man returned to hys house.

And whan dame Prudence sawe her tyme, she fayned and asked her lorde Melibe, what vengeaunce he thought to take on hys aduersaries.

To whyche Melibe answerde, and sayde: Certes (sayde he) I thynke and purpose me fully to disherite the of al that euer they haue, and for to punysshe them in exile for euer.

Certes sayd dame Prudence, thys were a cruel sentence, and moche ayenst reason. For ye be rich ynough, and haue no nede of other mennes riches. And ye might lyghtly in this wyse gete you a coueitous name, whiche is a vicious thyng, and ought be eschewed of euery good man. For after the sayenge of the auncyent: Coueitise is rote of al harmes. And therfore it were better to you to lese so much good of your owne, than for to take of theyr good in thys maner. For better it is to lese good with worshyp, than to wyn good with vilanye and shame. And euery man ought to do his dilygence and his busynesse, to gete him a good name. And yet shal he not onely be

byn

him in kepyng hys good name, but he shal
so enforce hym alwaye to do some thynge, by
whiche he may renewe hys good name. For
it is writte, that the old good lose of a mã or
good name, is soone gone and past, whan it
is not renewed. And as touchynge, that ye
say that ye wol exile your aduersaries: that
thynketh me moche ayenst reason, and out of
measure, consyderynge the power that they
haue yeue you vpon them selfe. And it is
written: that he is worthy to lese hys pryu-
lege, that mysuseth ꝑ might and power that
is gyuen hym. And I sette case, ye might en-
ioyne hem ꝑ payne by right & lawe, whiche
I trowe ye maye nat do: I saye, ye myghte
not put it to execution, for paraventure thau
it were lyke to tourne to ꝑ werre, as it was
before. And therfore yf ye woll that men do
you obeysaunce, ye muste demean you more
curteisly, that is to saye: ye muste yeue more
easy sentences and iugement. For it is writ-
ten: he that most curteisly commaundeth, to
hym men moost obey. And therfore I praye
you, that in thys necessyte and in thys nede,
ye caste you to ouercome your herte. For as
Senec sayth: he that ouercometh hys herte,
ouercometh twise. And Tully sayth: there is
nothyng so commendable in a great lorde, as
whan he is debonaire and meke, and apeseth
hym lyghtly. And I praye you that ye woll
nowe forbere to do vengeaunce, in suche a
maner, that youre good name maye be kepte
and conserued, and that men may haue cause
and matere to praise you of pyte and mercye:
and that ye haue no cause to repent you of
thynge that is done. For Senecke sayethe: he
ouercometh in an yuel maniere, that repen-
teth hym of hys victorie. Wherfore I praye
you, let mercy be in your herte, to theffecte and
entent, that god almyghtye haue mercy vpõ
you in hys last iugement. For sayntt James
sayth in hys Epistel: iugement without mer-
cye shal be do to hym, that hath no mercy of
another wighte.

Whan Melibee had herde the great
sayinges and reasons of dame Pru-
dence, and her wyse informations
and techynges, hys herte gan en-
cline to the wyl of hys wyfe: consyderyng her
trew entent, confirmed hym anon and assen-
ted fully to worke after her counsayle: & than
ked god, of whome procedeth all goodnesse &
vertue, that hym had sent a wyfe of so great
discretion. And whan the day came that his
aduersaries shulde apperr in his presence,
he spake to hem goodly, and sayde in thys
wyse.

Al be it so, that of your pryde and high pre
sumption and foly, and of your negligence &
vnconnyng, ye haue misborne you, and tres-
paced vnto me, yet for as mikel as I se and
beholde your great humilyte, and that ye be
sory and repentaunt of your gyltes, it constray-
neth me to do you grace and mercy: wherfore
I receyue you to my grace, and forgyue you
holy al the offences, iniuries, and wronges,
that ye haue don agayns me and myne, to
theffecte & ende, that god of his endlesse mer-
cy wol at the tyme of oure dyeng forgyue vs
our gyltes, that we haue trespaced to him in
thys wrecched worlde. For doutlesse yf we be
sory and and repentaunt for the synnes and
gyltes, whyche we haue trespaced in ꝑ syght
of oure lord god: he is so fre and so merciable,
that he woll forgyue vs oure gyltes, and
bringe vs to the blysse that neuer shall haue
ende. A M E N.

Here endeth the tale of Chaucer and here folowyth the Monkes Prologue.

Whan ended was the tale of Me-
libee
And of Prudence, and her be-
nygnyte
Our Host sayd, as I am sayth-
full man
And by the precious corps Madrian
I had leuer than a barel of ale
That Goodicke my wyfe had herd thys tale
For she nothyng is of suche pacience
As was thys Melibeus wyfe Prudence
By goddes bones, whã I bete my knaues
She bringeth me the great clubbed staues
And crieth, slee the dogges euerichone
And breke bothe backe and euery bone
And yf that any neyghbour of myne
Wol not in churche to my wyfe enclyne
Or be so hardy, to her to trespace
whan she cometh hom, she rãpeth in my face
And cryeth false cowarde wreke thy wyfe

By

By cryppes dominí, I wol haue thy knyfe
And thou shalt haue my dossaile, & go spynne
Fro day tyl nyght, for wol thus begynne.
Alas the stounde, that euer she was shape
To wedde a myllelop, a cotwarde ape
That wol be ouerlayde with euery wighte
Thou darst not stonde by thy wyues righte
This is my lyfe, but yf that I wold fighte
And out at doze, anon I mote me dighte
And eke I am lost, but yf that I
Be lyke a wylde lyon, fole hardy
I wote wel she wol do me slee some day
Some neyghbour, and than go my way
For I am perilous with knyfe in honde
Al be it that I dare not her withstonde
For she is bygge in armes be my faithe
That shal he fynd, that her myssedoth or saith
But lette vs passe away from this matere.
Why lord he sayd, sir monke: be mery of chere
For ye shal tel vs a tale trewly
Lo Rochester stondeth here fast by (game
Ride forth myne owne lorde, breke not oure
But by my trouthe I knowe not your name
whether I shal cal you my lorde dan John
Or dan Thomas, dan Robert, or dan Alhon
Or of what house be ye, by your fathers kyn
I bowe to god, thou hast a ful fayre chyn
It is a gentyl pasture there thou gost
Thou arte not lyke a pynaunt or a ghost
Upon my fayth thou arte some officere
Some worthy fermer, or some Celerere
For by my fathers soule, as to my dome
Thou art a mayster, whan thou art at home
No poore clerke, ne no poore nouyse
But a gouernoure wyse and wyse
And therwith of brawne and of bones
A wel farynge person for the nones
I pray to god yeue him confusyon
That first the brought in to religyon
Thou woldest be a trede foule a right
Haddest thou as grete leue as thou hast might
To performe al thy lust in engendrure
Thou haddest begoten many a creature
Alas, why werest thou so wyde a cope
God yeue me sorowe, and I were pope
Not only thou, but euery mighty man
Though he were shoue hyghe vpon his pan
Shuld haue a wyfe, for al this worlde is lorn
Religyon hath take vp al the corne
Of tredynge, and bestel men ben fleynges
Of fieble trees there cometh wrecched impes
This maketh that our heires be so slender
And feble, that they wrape not wel engender
This maketh that our wyues wol assay
Religious folke, for they may better pay
Of Venus paymentes, than mowe we
God wote no lusheburghs faye ye
But be not wroth my lorde, though I playe
Full sobre in game a sothe haue I herde saye.
This worthy monke toke al in pacience
And sayd, I wol do my dilygence
As ferre as sowneth in to honestee
To tel you a tale, ye two or thre
And yf ye lyst to herken hyderwarde
I wol you sayne, the lyfe of saynt Edwarde
Or elis tragedyes fyrst I wol tel.
Of whiche I haue an hundred in my cel.
Tragedy is to tel a certayne storye
As olde bokes maken memorye
Of hem that stode in grete prosperyte
And be fallen out of hye degre
In to myserye, and ended wretchedly
And they ben wretched comenly
Of syxe fete, whiche men cal eramettron
In prose eke ben endyted many on
And in metre, many a londrye wyse
Lo, this ought ynough to suffyse
Nowe herkeneth, yf you lyst for to here
But fyrst I beseche you in this matere
Though I by order tel nat these thynges
Be it of Popes, Emperours, or kynges
After her ages, as men wrytten fynde
But tellen hem, some before & some behynde
As it cometh nowe to my remembraunce
Haue me excused of myne ignoraunce.

Here endeth the Monkes Prologue, and here begynneth hys tale.

I wyl

I Wyl bewayle, in maner of tragedy
The harme of hem that stoden in hye degre
And fyl, so that there was no remedy
To bryng hem out of her aduersyte
For certayn, whan that fortune lyst to flye
There may no mã of her the course withold
Lete no man trust on blynde prosperite
Beholde by this ensample ponge and old

¶ Lucifer.

AT Lucifer, though he an angel were
And nat a mã, at him wyl I begynne
For though fortune maye nat angel fro hye degre, yet fel he for his synne
Down in to hel, where he is yet inne
O Lucifer, brightest of angels al
How art thou Bathanas, þ maist nat twyn
Out of mysery, in whiche thou arte fal

¶ Adam.

¶ Lo Adam, in the felde of Damascene
With goddes own fynger wrought was he
And not begotten of mannes sperm vncleene
And welte al paradise sauyng o tree
Neuer worldly man had so hye degre
As Adam, tyl he for mysgouernaunce
Was dryuen out of hys bygh prosperite
To labour and to hel, and to myschaunce.

¶ Sampson.

¶ Lo Samson, which þ was annunciate
By the angel longe or hys natiuite
And was to god almighty consecrate
And stode in nobles, while he myght se
Was neuer such another, as was he
To speke of strength, and therto hardynesse
But to his wyues tolde he his secre (nesse
Through which he slough him for wretched

Sampson, this noble & mighty champion
Without wepen, saue his hondes twey
He slough and al to rent the lyon
Toward hys weddyng, walking by the wey
His false wyfe couthe hym so plese & prye
Tyl she his counsayle knewe, & she vntrewe
Vnto his foes, his counsayle gan bewray
And hym forsoke, and toke another newe

An hundred foxes toke Sampson for yre
And al her tayles he togyther bonde
And set the foxes tayles al on fyre
For he in euery tayle hath put a bronde
And they brent al the cornes in that londe
And her olyues, and her vynes eke
A thousand men eke he slough with his hond
And had no wepen, but an asse cheke

Whã they were slayne, so thrysted him þ he was wel nye lorne, for which he gan to prey That god wold of his payn, haue some pyte And sende him drinke, or els mote he dey And of this asse cheke, that was so drey Out of a wange tothe, sprange anon a wel Of whiche he dronke ynough, shortly to sey Thus holpe him god, as Judicum can tel

By very force, at Gasa on a nyght
Maugre the Philystens of that cyte
The gates of the towne, he hath vp plyght
And on hys backe, pearied hem hath he
High on an hyl, where as men myght hem se
O noble mighty Sampson, lefe and dere
Had thou nat tolde to women thy secre
In al this worlde ne had be thy pere

This Sãpson neither syder drãke ne wyne
Ne on his heed cam rasour none ne shere
By precepte of the messangere diuyne
For al hys strength, in his heeres were
And fully twenty yere ly yere
Of Israel, he had the gouernaunce
But after soon thal he wepe many a tere
For women thal bryng hym to myschaunce.

Vnto his lemman Dalyda he tolde
That in his heeres, al his strength lay
And falsely to hys foes she hym solde
And slepyng in her barme vpon a day
She made to clyppe or shere his heeres away
And made his fomen al his craft espyen
And whan that they him fonde in suche aray
They bounde him faste, and put out his eyen

But er hys heeres were clypped or shaue
There was no bonde that might him bynde
But nowe is he put in prison in a caue
where as they made hym at þ querne grynde
O noble Sãpson, strongest of mankynde
O whylom luge in glorie and rychesse
Now mayst thou wepe wt thyn eyen blynde
Sith þ art from wele fal in to wretchednesse

The ende of this captife was, as I shal sey
Hys

Hys fomen made a feeſt vpon a daye
And made him, as their foole byfore hē pley
And this was in a temple of great araye
But at laſt he made a foule affray
For he two pyllers ſhoke, & made hem fal
And downe fel the temple al, and there it lay
And ſloughe hym ſelfe, and eke his fomen all

This is to ſay, the princes euerychone
And eke thre thouſād bodyes were ther ſlayn
with fallyng of the great temple of ſtone
Of Sampſon wol I no more ſayne
Beth ware by this enſaumple olde and playne
That no men tel her counſayle to her wyues
Of ſuch thyng as they wold haue ſecret fayn
Jf that it touche her lymmes or her lyues.

¶ Hercules.

Of Hercules, the ſouerayne conqueroure
Sprang hys werkes, laude, & hye renoun
For in hys tyme, of ſtrength he bare the floure
He ſlough and rafte the ſkyn of the lyoun
And of the Centaurs, layde the boſte adoun
He Harpias ſlewe, the cruel byrdes fel
He the golden appels rafte fro the dragon
He dzewe out Cerberus, the hounde of hel

He ſlewe the cruel tyraunt Buſirus
And made his horſe to frete him fleſh & bone
He ſlough the very ſerpent venemous
Of Achelous two hornes, brake he that one
And he ſlewe Cacus, in a caue of ſtone
He ſlough the gyaunt Antæus the ſtronge
He ſlough the griſly boze, and that anon
And bare his heed vpon his ſpere longe

was neuer wight, ſythe the worlde began
That ſlough ſo many monſters, as dyd he
Through the wyde worlde, his name ran
what for his ſtrenght and his bounte
And euery realme went he for to ſe
He was ſo ſtronge, þ no man might him let
And at bothe worldes endes, he Trophe
In ſtede of bounder, of braſſe a pyllour fet.

¶ A lemman had this noble champyon
That hight Deianire, as freſhe as ¶ May
And as clerkes make mencion
She hath him ſent a ſhyrte freſhe and gay
Alas this ſhirte, alas and wel away
Emenomed was ſubtelly with al
That er he had wearēd it halfe a daye
It made his fleſhe al fro hys bones fal.

But nathelelle, ſome clerkes her excuſen
By one that hight Neſſus, that it maked
Be as be may, I wol her not accuſen
But on his body, the ſhyrte he ware al naked
Tyl the fleſhe was with the venym flaked
And whan he ſawe none other remedye
In hote coles, he hath him ſelfe raked
For with no venym dayned he to dye

Thus ferſe this worthy mighty Hercules
Lo, who may truſte in fortune any throwe
For him that foloweth al this worlde of pres
Of he be ware, is oft layde ful lowe
Ful wyſe is he, that hym ſelfe can knowe
Beware, for whan that fortune lyſt to glot
Than wayteth ſhe, her mā downe to throwe
By ſuche a waye, as he wolde leſte ſuppoſe.

¶ Nabugodonoſor.

The mighty trone, the precious treſore
The glorious ſcepter, and royal mayeſte
That had the kynge Nabugodonoſore
with ſorge vnneth may diſcryued be
He ryche wanne Hieruſalem, that cyte
The veſſel of the temple he with him lad
At Babilon was his ſouerayne ſe
In whiche his glorie and his delyte he had.

The fayreſt children of the blode royal
Of Hieruſalem, he dyd do gelde anone
And made eche of hem to ſen hys thral
Amonge al other Danyel was one
That was the wyſeſt of euerychone
For he the dremes of the kyng expowned
where as in Caldee clerkes were there none
That wyſt to what fyne his dreme ſowned

This proude kyng let make a ſtatu of gold
Sixty cubites longe, and ſeuen in brede
To whiche ymage, bothe yonge and olde
Commaunded he to loute, and haue in drede
Or in a furneys, ful of flames rede
He ſhulde be dred, þat wolde not obey
But neuer wolde aſſent to that dede
Danyel, ne his yonge felowes twey

¶ This

¶Thys kynge of kynges, proude and elate
Wende god, that sytteth in maieste
Nemyght hym not byreue of hys estate
But sodeynly he lost hys dygnite
And lyke a beest, hym semed for to be
And eate hey as an ore, and laye therout
In rayne, wyth wylde beestes walked he
Tyll a certayne tyme was come aboute

And lyke an Egles fethers were hys heeres
And hys nayles lyke brydes clawes were
God releued hym at certayne yeres
And yaue hym wytte, & thē with many a tere
He thanked God, and all hys lyfe in fere
Was he, to do amysse, or more trespace
And er that he layde was on hys bere
He knewe þ god was full of myght & grace

¶Balthaser.

HIs sonne, wherfore that hyght Balthasare
That helde the reygne after hys fathers daye
He by hys father couthe not beware
For proude he was of herte, and of aray
And eke an ydolastre was he aye
Hys hygh estate, assured hym in pryde
But fortune cast hym downe, & there he laye
And sodeynly hys raygne gan deuyde

A feest he made, vnto hys lordes al
Upon a tyme, he made hem blyth be
And then hys officers gan he call
Gothe bringe forth the vessels (q he)
wherof that my father in hys prosperite
Out of the temple of Hierusalem byraste
And to our goddes thanken we
Of honoure, that our elders with vs laste

Hys wyfe, hys lordes, and hys cōcubynes
Aye dronken, whyles her appetytes laste
Out of these noble vessels, sondrye wynes
And on a wall, thys kynge hys eyen caste
And saw an hōde armelesse, that wrote faste
For feare of whych he quoke, & syghed sore
This honde þ Balthasar made sore agaste
Wrote (Mane techel phares) and no more

¶In al that lande, magicien was ther none
That coude expowne what thys letter ment
But Daniel expowned it anone
And sayd, kynge, god thy father sent
Glorye and honoure, reygne, treasour, & rent
And he was proude, & nothynge god he dred
And therfore great wrath god vpō him sente
And hym byraste the raygne that he had

He was out caste of mannes companye
wyth asses was hys habitacion
And eate hey as a beest, in wete and drye
Tyl that he knewe, by grace and by reson
That god of heauen hath domination
Ouer euery reygne, and euery creature
And then had God of hym compassyon
And hym restored his reygne and his figure

¶Eke thou þ art hys sonne, arte proude also
And knowest all these thynges prively
And arte rebell to god, and hys foe
Thou dranke eke of hys vessels boldly
Thy wyfe eke, and thy wenches synfully
Dronke of the same vessels sondrye wynes
And heryed false goddes cursedly
Therfore to the shapen great payne is

This honde was sent fro god, þ on the wall
wrote (Mane techel phares) truste me
Thy reygne is done thou wotest not al
Deuyded is thy realme, and it shalbe
To Medes and to Persiens (quod he)
And that same nyght the kynge was slawe
And Darius occupyed hys dignite
Though he therto had nether right ne lawe

Lordynges, here ensample mowe ye take
Howe that in lordshyp is no sykernesse
For when that fortune wol a man forsake
She bereth away hys raygne, & hys richesse
And eke hys frendes, both more and lesse
And what man hath fredes, through fortune
Hys shap wol make hym enemyes I gesse
Thys prouerbe is ful soth, and ful commune

¶Zenobia.

ZEnobia of Palmerye quene
(As wryteth perciās of her noblesse)
So worthy was in armes, & so kene
þ no wight passed her in hardynesse
Ne i linage, ne i none other gētilnes
Of kynges blode of Perce she is dyscended
I say that she had not moste fayrnesse
But of her shape she myght not be amended

From hee chylhode I fynde that she fledde
Offyce of woman, and to woode she went
And many a wylde hertes bloode she shedde
With

wyth arowes brode, that she to hem sent
She was so swyfte, that she anone hem hent
And when that she was elder, she wolde kyll
Lyons, lybardes, and beres al to rent
And in her armes welde hem at her wyll

She durst wylde beestes dennes seke
And renne in the mounteyns al the nyght
And slepe vnder a bushe, & she couthe eke
wrastell by very force, and by very myght
wyth any yõge má, were he neuer so wyght
There myght no thynge in her armes stonde
She kept her maydenhede frõ euery wyght
To no man dayned she to be bonde

But at last, her frendes hath her maryed
To Odenat, a prince of that countre
Al were it so, that she hem longe taryed
And ye shall vnderstande, howe that he
Had suche fantasyes as had she
But natheless, when they were knyt in fere
They lyued in ioye and in felicite
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere

Saue one thynge, she nolde neuer assent
By no waye, that he shulde by her lye
But ones, for it was her playne entent
To haue a chylde, the worlde to multyplye
And also sone as she myght aspye
That she was not vh chylde wyth that dede
Then wolde she suffre hym do hys fantasye
Efte sones, and not but ones out of drede

And yf she were wyth chylde at that caste
Nomore shulde he playe that game
Tyll fully fourty dayes were paste
Then wolde she ones suffre hym the same
Al were thys Odenat wylde or tame
He gate nomore of her, for thus she sayd
It was to wyues lechery and shame
In other case, yf men wyth hem playde

Two sonnes by thys Odenat had she
The whych she kept in vertue and lettrure
But nowe vnto our tale turne we
I saye that so worshypfull a creature
And wyse therwyth, and large wyth mesure
So penyble in warre, and curteys eke
Ne more laboure myght in warre endure
Was none, though al thys worlde mé wolde (seke
Her ryche araye, ne myght not be tolde
As well in vessell as in her clothynge
She was al clad in pierry and in golde
And eke she lefte not for none huntynge
To haue of sondry tonges felle knowynge
when that she leyser had for to entende
To lerne bokes was all her lykynge
Howe she in vertue her lyfe myght dyspende

And shortly of thys storye for to treate
As doughty was her husbonde as she
So that they cõquered many reygnes grete
In the Orient, wyth many a fayre cyte
Apperteynaunt vnto the maiestie
Of Rome, & wyth strength helde them fast
Ne neuer myght her foe men do her flee
All the whyle that Odenates dayes laste

Her batayles, who so lyste hem for to rede
Ageyne Sapor the kynge, and other mo
And howe all thys proces fyll in dede
why she cõquered, & what title she had therto
And after of her myschefe and of her wo
Howe that she was besieged, and taake
Let hym to my mayster Petrarke go
That writeth ynough of thys, I vnderstande

When Odenat was deed, she myghtely
The realmes helde, & wyth her owne honde
Agaynst her foes she fought truely (londe
That ther was no prince ne kynge, in al that
But were glad, yf they that grace fonde
That she ne shulde vpon hys lande werreye
wyth her they made alyaunce by bonde
To be in peace, and let hem ryde and pleye

The Emperour of Rome Claudius
Ne hym before, the romayne Galyen
Ne durst neuer be so corageus
Ne none Armen, ne none Egypcien
Ne Surrien, ne none Arabien
wythin the felde, that durst wyth her fyght
Lest þ she wolde hem wyth her hondes slen
Or wyth her meyne, put hem to flyght

In kynges habyte wente her sonnes two
As the heyres of her realmes all
And Herimanno and Timalleo
Her names were, as perteins hem call
But aye fortune, hath in her hony gall
This myghty quene, may no whyle endure
Fortune out of her reygne made her to fal
To wretchednesse, and to myserenture

Aurelius

Aurelian, when that the gouernaunce
Of Rome came in hys hondes twey
He hope vpon thys quene to do vengeaunce
And with hys legions, he toke hys wey
Towarde zenobia, and shortly for to say
He made her flye, and at laste her hent
And fettered her, and eke her chyldren tway
And wan the lõde, & home to Rome he went

Amonge other thynges that he wan
Her chare, ꝑ of golde was wrought & pierre
Thys great Romayne, thys Aurelian
Hath with hym ladde, that for men shulde se
Before hys tryumphe walked she
With golden chaynes on her necke hongyng
Crowned she was, as after her degre
And full of pierre charged her clothynge

Alas fortune, she that whylom was
Dredfull to kynges, and to emperoures
Nowe gaineth all the people on her, alas
And she that helmed was in starke stoures
And wan by force townes stronge, & toures
Shall on her heed nowe were autremyte
And she that bare the septre ful of floures
Shal beare a dystaffe, her coste for to quyte

Nero.

Al though that Nero were as vicious
As any fende that lyeth full lowe adoun
Yet he, as telleth vs suetoni⁹
Al this worlde had i subiectiõ
Both este, and west, and Septentrion
Of Rubyes, sapheres and of perles whyte
Were al hes clothes broudred vp and doun
For he in gemmes greatly gan delyte

More delycate, more pompous of aray
More proude, was neuer Emperour, thẽ he
That vse cloth that he had wered o day
After that tyme, he nolde it neuer se
Nettes of golde threde had he great plente
To fysshe in Tyber, when hym lyst to play
Hys lustes were as lawe, in hys degre
For fortune as hys frende wolde hym obay

He Rome brent for hys delycacye
The Senatours he slewe vpon a day
To here how her wyues wolde wepe & crye
And slough hys brother, & by his syster laye
Hys mother made he in a pytouse aray
For her wombe let slytte, to beholde
where he conceyued was, so welaway
That he so lytell of hys mother tolde

No teeres out of hys eyen, for that syght
He came, but sayd, a fayre women was she
Great wonder is, that he coude or myght
Be domytian, of her deed beaute
The wyne to bringe hym, commaunded he
And dranke anone, none other wo he made
when myght is ioyned vnto crueltie
Alas, to depe wyl the venyme wade

In youth a mayster had thys Emperoure
To teache hym lettrure, and curtelye
For of moralite he was the floure
As in hys tyme, but yf hys bokes lye
And whyles hys mayster had of hym mastrye
He made hym so conynge and so couple
That longe tyme it was or tyrannye
Or any vyce, durste in hym vncouple

Senec his maister was, of which I deuyse
Because Nero had of hym suche drede
For he for hys vyces wolde hym chastyse
Discretly as by worde, and not by dede
Syr he wolde saye, an emperour mote nede
Be vertuouse, and hate tyrannye
For whych he made hym in a bath to blede
On both hys armes, tyll he multe dye

Thys Nero had eke of a customaunce
In youth, ayenst hys mayster to ryse
which afterward, him thought gret greuaūce
Because he ofte wolde hym chastyse
Therfore he made hym dye in thys wyse
To chose in a bath to dye in thys manere
Rather then to haue another turmentyse
And thus hath Nero slayne hys master dere

Nowe fell it so, that fortune lyst no longer
The hygh pryde of Nero to cherysshe
For tho he were stronge, yet was she strõger
She thought thus, by god I am to nyce
To set a man, that is fulfylled of vyce
In hye degre, and an emperour hym call
By God out of hys sete I woll hym tryce
when he lest weneth, sonest shall he fall

The people rose vpon hym on a nyght
For hys defaute, and when he it aspyed

Out of his doores anon he hath him dyght
Alone, and there he wende haue ben alyed
He knocked faste, & aye the more he cryed
The faster shette they the doores all
Tho wyste he wel, he had him selfe begyled
And went his way, no lenger durste he call

The people cryed & rombled vp and doun
That th his eeres he herde howe they sayde
Where is this false tyraunt, this Neroun
For feare ful nere of his wytte he brayde
And to his goddes, right pitously he prayde
For socoure, but it might not betyde
For drede of this, him thought that he deyde
And ranne in to a gardeyn, him to hyde

And in this gardayne, foude he choyles twey
Sittyng by a fyre great and reed
And to the choyles two he gan to prey
To slee him, and to gryde of his heed
That to his bodye, whan he were deed
Were no dispyte done, for his diskame
Him selfe he slough, he couide no better rede
Of whiche fortune lough and had game.

¶ Holofernes.

Was neuer capitayne vnder a kyng
That reignes mo, put in subiectyó
Nestroger was in feld, of al thyng
As i this tyme, ne greater ofrenou
Ne more pompous in hygh presumpcioun
Than Holopherne, which fortune aye kyste
And so lycorously ladde him vp and doun
Tyl that he deed was er that he wyste

Not only that this world had of him awe
For lesyng of rychesse and lyberte
But he made euery man renye his lawe
Nabugodonosor was lorde, sayd he
None other god shulde honoured be
Ayenst his hest, there dare no wight trespace
Saue in Bethulia, a stronge cyte
where Eliachym was preest of that place

But take kepe of ỳ derthe of Holopherne
Amyd his host, he dronke laye al nyght
within his tent, large as is a berne
And yet for al his pompe, & al his might
Judith, a woman, as he lay vpright
Slepyng, his heed of smote, and fro his tente
Ful pryuely she stale, from euery wight
And with his heed, vnto her towne she wēte

¶ Antiochus.

What nedeth it of kynge Antiochus
To tell hys hyghe and royall maieste
Hys great pryde, hys werke benemus
For suche an other man nas neuer as he
Redeth what that he was in Machabe
And redeth the proude wordes that he spak
And why he fyl from his prosperyte
And in an hyl, howe wretchedly he deyde

Fortune him had enhaunsed so in pryde
That verily he wende he might attayne
Unto the sterres, vpon euery syde
Inden a balaunce, to wey eche mountayne
And al the floodes of the see restrayne
And goddes people had he moste in hate
Hem wolde he slee, in turment and in payne
Wenyng that god ne might his pryde abate

And for that Aychanore and Tymothe
By iewes were venquisshed mightyly
Unto the iewes suche an hate had he
That he bad greythe his chare full hastely
And swore and sayd, ful dispytously
Unto Hierusalem he wolde ryght sone
To wreke his yre on it ful cruelly
But of his purpose was he let ful sone

God for his manace him sore smote
with inuysible wounde, aye incurable
That in his guttes carke so and bote
That hys paynes were unportable
And certaynly the wreche was resonable
For many a mannes guttes dyd he payne
But from his purpose, cursed & dampnable
For al his smerte, he nolde him not restrayne

But bade anon, aparayle his hoste
And sodaynly, or he than was ware
God daunted al his pryde, & al his boste
For he so sore fel out of his chare
That al his lymmes and his shern to tare
So that he ne myght go ne ryde
But in a chayre, men aboute him bare
Al forbrused bothe backe and syde

The wreche of god him smote so cruelly
That in his body wicked wormes crepe
And therwith al he stanke so horribly

That none of hys meyne, that hym kepe
whether that he woke or els slepe
He myght not of hym the stynke endure
And in hys myschefe he wayled & eke wept
And to we god, lorde of euery creature.

To all hys hoste, and to hym selfe also
Ful lothsome was the stynke of hys carayne
No man myght hym beare to ne fro
And in hys stynke, & in hys horrible payne
He stert ful wyet ches dyen a mountayne
Thus hath hys robbour, & hys homicide
That many a man made to wepe and playne
Suche guerdon as belongeth to pryde.

¶ Alexander.

The storye of Alexander is so commune
That euery wyght, that hath discretion
Hath herde somwhat or al, of hys fortune
Thys wyde worlde as in conclusyon
He wanne by strength and for hys renoun
They were glad for peace vnto hym sende
The pryde of man and bost he larde adoun
where so he came, vnto the worldes ende

Comparison myght yet neuer be maked
Betwyxte hym, and an other conquerour
For al thys world for dred of hi hath quaked
He was of knyghthode, & of fredome flour
Fortune hym made ꝑ heyre of hygh honoure
Saue wyne & wome, nothig might aswage
Hys hygh entent in armes and laboure
So was he full of louynge corage.

what prise were it to him, though I you told
Of Darius, & of a hundred thousande mo
Of princes, erles, and knyghtes bolde
whych he conquered, and brought to wo
I saye as ferre as a man may ryde or go
The world was his, what shuld I more de:
For though I wrote & told you euer mo
Of hys knyghthode, it myght not suffyse

Twelue yere he reigned, as I rede i Bacha
Philippes sonne of Macedone he was (be
That first was kyng of Grece, that countre
O worthy gentyl Alexander, alas
That euer shulde the fall suche a caas
Empoysoned of thy folke thou were
Thy syre, fortune hath tourned in to an ace
And yet for the ne wept she neuer a tere

Who shal yeue men teares to complayne
The death of gentylnesse, and of fraunchyse
That all the worlde welded in hys demayne
And yet hym thought it myght not suffyse
So ful was hys corage of hygh empryse
Alas, who shall me helpe to endyte
False fortune, and poyson to dyspyse
The whych of all thys two I wyte.

¶ Julius Cesar.

Be wysdome, manhode, and hyghe laboure
From humble bedde to royal maieste
Up rose he, Julius the conquerour
That al the occident, by londe and see
wan by strength of honde, or els by trete
And vnto Rome made hem tributary
And syth of Rome, emperour was he
Tyl that fortune wexte hys aduersary

O myghty Cesar, that in Thessaly
Ayenst Pompei, father thyne in lawe
That of the Orient had the chyualry
As ferre as that the day begynneth dawe
Them through knyghthod hast take & slawe
Saue fewe folke, ꝑ wyth Pompeius fledde
Through whych ꝑ putteth all ꝑ orient in awe
Thanke fortune, that so wel the spedde

¶ But nowe a lytel whyle I wol bewayle
This Pompei, thys noble gouernour
Of Rome, whych that fledde at thys bataylle
I saye one of hys men, a false traytour
Hys heed of smote, to wynne hym fauour
Of Julius, and to hym the heed brought
Alas Pompei, of the orient conquerour
That fortune vnto suche a fyne the wrought

¶ To Rome agayne repayreth Julius
wyth hys triumphe lauriate ful hye
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
That euer had of hys hye estate enuye
Full priuely had made conspyracye
Ayenst thys Julius, in subtel wyse
And caste the place, in whych he shulde dye
wyth bodekyns, as I shal you deuyse

Thys Julius vnto the capitol went
Upon a daye, as he was wonte to gone

And in the capitol, amonge hym hent
Thys falſe Brutus, and hys other fone
And ſtyked hym with bodkyns anone
With many a wounde, & thus they let him lye
But neuer grutched he at no ſtroke but one
Or elſe at two, but yf hys hoppe lye

So manly was thys Iulius of herte
And ſo well loued eſtately honeſte
That tho hys deedly woundes ſo ſore ſmerte
Hys mantel ouer hys nyppes caſte he
For no man ſhulde ſe hys preuetye
And as he laye in dyenge on a traunce
And wyſte verely that dye ſhulde he
Of honeſtye yet had he remembraunce

Lucan to the thys ſtorye I recomende
And to Sueton, and Valery alſo
That of thys ſtorye wryten wonde & ende
Howe that theſe conquerours two
Fortune was fyrſt a frende, and ſythe a foe
No man truſte vpon her fauoure longe
But haue her in awayte for euer mo
Wytneſſe on all the conquerours ſtronge.

Creſus.

The ryche Creſus, whylom
kynge of Lyde
Of whyche Creſus, Cirus
for hym dradde
Yet was he caught amydde
all hys pryde
And to brenne, men to the fyre hym lad
But ſuch a raine downe fró ꝑ fyrmament ſhad
That quenyt the fyre, & made hym to ſcape
But to bewaare yet no grace he had
Tyl fortune on the galowes made him gape

When he eſcaped was, he could not ſtent
For to begyn a newe araye agayne
He wende wel, for that fortune hym ſent
Suche happe, ꝑ he eſcaped thrugh ꝑ rayne
That of hys foes he myght not be ſlayne
And eke a ſweruen vpon a nyght he mette
Of whych he was ſo proude, & eke ſo fayne
That in vengeaunce he all hys herte ſette

Vpon a tree he was as hym thought
Ther Jupiter hym waſhe, both backe & ſyde
And Phebus eke a fayre towel hym brought
To drye him with, & therwith wext his pryd
And to hys doughter, that ſtode hym beſyde
whych ꝑ he knewe in hys ſentence habounde
He bade her tell what it ſygnyfyed
And ſhe his deme ryght thus dyd expounde

The tree (ꝑ ſhe) the galous is to mene
And Jupiter betokeneth ſnowe and rayne
And Phebus, wyth hys towel ſo clene
Betokeneth the ſonne beames, ſoth to ſayne
Thou ſhalt honged be, fader certayne
Rayne ſhall the waſhe, & ſonne ſhall the drye
Thus ſhe warned hym full plat & ful payne
Hys doughter, that called was Phanye

And honged was Creſus the proude kynge
Hys royall trone myght hym not auayle
Tragedye is none other maner thynges
Me can in ſtorynge ellis ne bewayle
But for that fortune alday wol aſſayle
wyth bewaare ſtrok, ꝑ regnes ꝑ be proude
For whē men truſteth her, then wol ſhe fayle
And couer her bryght face wyth a cloude.

Peter of Spayne.

O noble, o worthy Petro glory
of Spayne
whome fortune helde ſo hygh in
maieſte
wel ought men thy pytous death complayne
Out of thy lande, thy brother made the fle
And after at a ſiege by ſubtelte
Thou were betrayed, & ladde vnto hys tente
where as he with hys owne hande ſlewe the
Sauf dynge in thy playne and in thy tente

The felde of ſnowe, wt thegle of black therin
Caught wyth ꝑ lyrnrod, coloured as ꝑ glede
He brewe thys curſydneſſe, and al this ſynne
The wycked neſte was werker of thys dede
Not Charles, Oliuer, that tok aye hede
Of trouth and honoure, but of Armorike
Genilon Oliuer, corrupte for mede
Brought thys worthy kynge in ſuch a brike.

Petro kynge of Cypre.

Worthy Petro, kinge of Cypre alſo
That Alexandre wanne by hygh
maiſtrye
Ful many an hethē wrought he ſl ꝑ wo
Of whych thyne owne leges had enuye
And for no thynge, but for thy chyualrye
They in thy bed han ſlayne ꝑ by ꝑ morowe
Thus can fortune her whele gouerne & gye

And

And out of ioye bryng men to sorowe

Barnabo vicounte.

Of Milan great Barnabo vicounte
God of deiyte, and scourge of Lumbardye
Why shulde I not thyn infortune accounte
Sens in astate thou clomben were so hye
Thy brothers sonne, ꝑ was thy double alye
For he thy neuewe was, and sonne in lawe
Within his prison made the to dye
But why ne how not I, ꝑ thou were slawe.

Hugelyne of Pyse.

Of the erle Hugelyne of Pyse the langour
There may no tonge tel for pyte
But lyche a tyr of Pyse stonte a toure
In whyche toure in prison put was he
And with hym ben his lytel children thre
The eldest scarsly fyue yere of age
Alas fortune it was a great cruelte
Suche brydes for to put in suche a cage

Dampned was he to dye in that prison
For Roger, which that bysshop was of Pyse
Had on hym made a false suggestyon
Through which ꝑ people gan vpon him rise
And put him in prison, in suche a wyse
As ye haue herde, and meate & drinke he had
So smal, that vnnethe it may suffyse
And therwithal it was ful poore and bad

And on a day befel, that in that houre
Whā that his meate wont was to be brought
The gayler shette the doores of the toure
He herde it wel, but he spake right nought
And in his herte anon there fyl a thought
That they for hunger wolde do him dyen
Alas ꝙ he alas that I was wrought
Therwith the teres fyl fro hys eyen

His yonge sonne, that thre yere was of age
Unto him said, father father why do ye wepe
Whan wyl the gayler bring our potage
Is there no morsel breed that ye do kepe
I am so hungry, that I may not slepe
Nowe wolde god that I might slepe euer
Than shuld not hunger in my wombe crepe
There nys nothig but breed ꝑ me were leuer

Thus day by day, this child began to crye
Tyl in his fathers arme adowne it laye
And sayd, farwel father I mote dye
And kyste his father, and deyde the same day
And whan the wofull father dyd it sey
For wo, his armes two he gan to byte
And said alas, fortune and welaway
Thy false whele, my wo al may it wyte

His children wende, that it for hūger was
That he his armes gnewe, and not for wo
And sayd: father, do nat so (alas)
But rather eate the flesshe vpon vs two
Our flesh ꝑ yaue vs, take our flesh vs fro
And eate ynough, right thus they to him said
And after that within a day or two
They layde hem in his lappe adoun, & deyde

Thus ended is this mighty erle of Pyse
Him selfe dispeyred eke, for hunger starke
From hygh estate fortune away hym carke
Of this Tragedy, it ought ynough suffyse
Who so wol here it in a longer wyse
Redeth the great Poete of Itayle
That hyght Dante, for he can it al deuyse
Fro poynt to point, not a word wol he fayle.

Here endeth the Monkes tale.

Here stynteth the knyght the mōke of his tale, and here folowyth the Prologue of the Nonnes preest.

Ho (ꝙ the knyght) good sir no more of this
That ye haue said, is right ynough ywys
And mokel more, for lytel heuynesse
Is right ynough to moche folke, I gesse
I saye for me, it is a great disease
where as men haue be in welth and ease
To here of her sodayne fal, alas
And the contrary is ioye and solas
As whan a man hath ben in poore estate

And clymbeth vp, and wepeth fortunate
And there abydeth in prosperite
Such thynges is glaldome, as thynketh me
And of suche thyng were good for to tel.
Ye (q̄ our Host) by seynt Poules bel
Ye say right soth, this monke clappeth loude
He spake, how fortune cout with a cloude
I wote not what, and also of a Tragedy
Right nowe ye herde, and perdy no remedy
It is for to bewaylen, ne complayne
That that is done, and als it is a payne
As ye haue sayd, to here of heuynesse
Sir mōke no more of this, so god you blesse
Your tale anoyeth al this company
Suche talkyng is not worth a butterfly
For therin is there no disporte ne game
Therfore sir monke, dā Piers by your name
I pray you hertely, tel vs somwhat elles
For sykerly, nere clynkyng of your belles
That on your bridell honge, on euery syde
By heuen kyng, that for vs al dyde
I shulde er this haue fal downe for slepe
Al though the slough had ben neuer so depe
Than had your tale al be tolde in vayne
For certaynly, as that these clerkes seyne
Where as a man may haue none audyence
Nought helpeth it to tel hys sentence
And wel I wote, the substaunce is in me
If any thyng, shal wel reported be
Sir, saye somwhat of huntyng I you pray
Nay (q̄ this mōke) I haue no lust to play
Nowe let an other tel, as I haue tolde.
¶ Thā spake our host, vp rude speche & bolde
And sayd, vnto the nonnes preest anon
Come nere p̄ preest, come hider thou sir John
Tel vs such a thing, as may our hertes glade
Be blythe, though thou ryde vpon a iade
What though thy horse be bothe foule & lene
If he wol serue the, recke not a bene
Loke that thy herte be merry euer mo
Yes sir (q̄ he) yes host, so mote I go
But I be mery, iwys I wol be blamed
And Right anon, his tale he hath atamed
And thus he sayd, vnto vs euerychon
This swete preest, this goodly man sir John



Poore wydowe, some del
ystept in age
was whylom dwellyng in a
poore cotage
Besyde a groue, stondynge in
a dale

This wydowe, of which I tel you my tale
Sens the day that she was laste a wyfe
In patience, ledde a ful symple lyfe
For lytel was her catel and her rente
By husbondrie, of suche as god her sente
She foude her self, & eke her doughters two
Thre large sowes had she, and no mo
Thre kyne, & eke a shepe that hyght Mal
wel sooty was her bowre, and eke her hal
In whyche she ete many a sklender mele
Of poynaut sauce, ne knewe she neuer a dele
Ne deynty morsel passed through her throte
Her diet was accordaunt to her cote
Replecion ne made her neuer sycke
A temperate diete was her phisycke
And exercyse, and hertes suffysaunce
The goute let her nothing for to daunce
Ne apoplexie shent not her heed
No wyne ne dranke she, whyte ne reed
Her boyde was moste serued vp with whyte & blak
Milke & broū breed in which she fonde no lak
Seynde bacon, & sometyme an ey or two
For she was as it were a maner dey.
¶ A yerde she had, enclosed al aboute
with stykes, and drye dyched without
In which she had a cocke hyght Chauntecleer
In al the londe, of crowyng nas hys peer.
His voyce was merryer than the merry orgon
On masse dayes, that in the churches gon
Wel sykerer was his crowyng in his logge
Than is a clocke, or in an abbey an orloge
By nature he knewe eche ascencioun
Of the equynoctial in the toun
For when degrees xv. were ascended
Thā crewe he, that it might not be amended
His combe was redder than the fyne coral
And batelled, as it had be a castel wal
His byl was blacke, as any geet it shone
Lyke asure were his legges and his tone
His nayles whyter than the lylly flour
And lyke the burned golde was his colour.
¶ This gentil cocke, had in gouernaunce
Seuen hennes, to done his pleasaunce
Which were his sustres, and his paramours
And wonder lyke to him, as of colours
Of whiche the fayrest hewed in the throte
was

Here endeth the Prologue of the nonnes preest, and here folowed hys tale.

was called fayre damoisel Pertelote
So fethered her an hundred tymes a daye
And she him pleaseth, al that euer she maye
Curteys she was, discrete, and debonayre
And compenable, and bare her selfe so fayre
Syns the tyme that she was seuenyght olde
That truly che, she hath the herte in holde
Of Chauntecleere, lodyng in euery lyth
Ye loueth her so, that wel was him therwith
But such a tope it was to here hem synge
When the bright sunne gan to springe
In swete accorde, my lefe is fette in londe
For that tyme, as I haue vnderstonde
Beestes and byrdes couthe speke and synge
And it so fyl, that in the dawnyng
As Chauntecleere, amonge his wyues al
Sate on his perche, that was in the hal
And nere hym sate his fayre Pertelote
This Chauntecleere gan to grone in his throte
As a man in his dreme is drenched sore
And whan that Pertelot thus herde him rore
She was agaste, and sayd herte dere
What eyleth you to grone in this manere
Ye be a very sleper, fye for shame.
And he answerde thus, by god madame
I pray you that ye take it not in greue
By god I mette, I was in suche mischefe
Right now, that yet myn herte is sore a fryght
Now god (q he) my swenen rede a right
And kepe my body out of foule prisoun
As me mette, that I romed vp and doun
Within our yerde, where I sawe a beest
Was lyke an houde, & wold haue made arrest
Upon my body, and wolde haue had me dead
His colour was betwyxt yelowe and reed
And typped was his tayle, & bothe his eeres
With black, vnlike the remenant of his heeres
His snowte smal, with glowyng eyen tweye
Yet for his loke, almoste for feare I deye
This causeth me my gronyng doutelesse.
Away (q she) fye for shame herteles
Alas (q she) for by god aboue
Now haue ye lost my herte, & al my loue
I can not loue a coward by my faythe
For certes, what so any woman sayth
We al desyre, yf that it myght be
To haue husbondes, hardy, wyse, and fre
And secrete, and no nygarde, ne no fole
Ne fle fro that is agaste of euery tole
Ne none auauntour, by that god aboue
How dorst ye say for shame, vnto your loue
That anye swenen might make you a fearde
Haue ye no mannes herte, and haue a berde
Alas, and con ye be a ferde of swenenis
Nothing but vanyte god wotte in swenen is
Swenens ben engendred of replections
And of fume, and of complections
Whan humours ben to habundant in a wight
Certes thys dreme, whyche ye haue met to night
Cometh of superfluyte, & reed colour parde
Whiche cause folke to drede in her dremes
Of arowes, and of fyre with reed lemes
Of reed beestes, that wol hem byte
Of contrke, and of wasshes great and lyte
Right as the humour of melancolye
Causeth many a man in slepe to crye
For fere of great bulles, and beres blake
Or els that blacke dyuels wol hem take
Of other humours couthe I tel also
That worke a man in slepe moche wo
But I wol passe, as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, which that was so wyse a man
Sayd he not thus, do no force of dremes
Now sir (q she) whan we flye fro the bemes
For goddes loue, as taketh some laxatyfe
Up peryl of my soule, and of my lyfe
I counsayle you the beste, I wol not lye
That bothe of colour, and of melancolye
Ye purge you, and for ye shul not tary
Though in this towne be none apotecary
I shal my selfe two herbes teche you
That shal be for your heale, & for your prow
And in our yerde, the herbes shal I fynde
The whiche haue of her propertie by kynde
To purge you bynethe, and eke abouen
Forgete not this for goddes owene loue
Ye be right colerike of complection
Where the sunne is in his ascention
Ne fynde you not replete of humours hote
For yf ye do, I dare wel lay a grote
That ye shal haue a feuer tertiane
Or els an ague, that may be your bane
A day or two, ye shal haue digestyues
Of wormes, or ye take your laxatyues
Of laurel, centorie, and of fenetere
Or els of elder berryes, that growe there
Of catapuce, or of gaytres beris
Of herbe yue, growing in our yerde the mery is
Pluck hem vp as they growe, & eate hem in
Be mery husbonde, for your father kyn
Dredeth no dreme, I can say you no more.
Madame (q he) gramercy of your lore
But nathelesse, as touchyng dan Catoun

That

That of wysdom hath so great renoun
Though he lakke no bremes for to brede
By god, men may in olde bokes rede
Of many a man, more of auctorite
Than euer Caton was, so mote I the
That al the reuers sayth of hys sentence
And haue wel founde by experyence
That dremes ben sygnyfycations
As wel of ioye, as of tribulations
That folke endure, in this lyfe present
Ther nedeth to make of this none argument
The very preue sheweth it in dede
One of the greatest auctours that men rede
Sayth this, that whylom two felawes wente
On pylgrimage, in ful good entente
And happed so, they come in to a toun
Where as there was suche congregacion
Of people, and eke of herbygage
That they ne fonde, as moche as a cotage
In whiche they bothe myght yloged be
Wherfore they mote of necessyte
As for that nyght, departe company
And eche of hem gothe to his hosteley
And take hys lodgyng, as it wolde fal
That one of hem, was lodged in a stal
Fer in a yerde, with oxen of the plough
That other man was lodged wel ynough
As was his auenture, or his fortune
That vs gouerneth al, as in comune
And so befel, longe or it were day
That this man mette in his bedde, there as he lay
Howe that his felowe gan vpon him cal
And sayd (alas) for in an ores stal
This nyght shal I be murdred there I lye
Nowe helpe me dere brother or I dye
In al haste, come to me (he sayd)
This man out of hys slepe for feere abrayd
But whan he was waked of his slepe
He turned him, and toke of this no kepe
Him thought his dreme was but a vanyte
Thus twyse in his slepe dremed he
And at the thyrde tyme, yet his felawe
Cam as him thought, and sayd I now am slawe
Beholde my blody woundes, depe and wyde
Aryse vp erly, in the morowe tyde
And at the west gate of the towne (quod he)
A carte ful of donge, there shalt thou se
In whiche my body is hydde ful preuely
Do thou that carte arreste boldly
My golde caused my deth, sothe to sayne
And told him euery point how he was slayn
With a ful pytous face, pale of hewe
And trust wel his dreme, he found right ther
For on the morowe, as sone as it was day
To his felowes inne, he toke the waye
And when that he came to the ores stal
After his felowe, he began to cal
The hosteler answerde him anon
And sayd, syr your felowe is gon
As sone as it was day, he went out of ꝑ toun
This man gan fal in suspecioun
Remembryng of his dremes that he mette
And forthe he goth, no lenger wolde he lette
Vnto the west gate of the towne, and fonde
A donge carte, as it were to donge londe
That was arayed in the same wyse
As ye haue herde the dede man deuyse
And with hardy herte, he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and iustyce of this felonye
My felowe murdred is this same nyght
And in this carte he lythe gapyng vpright
I crye out on the myrusters (quod he)
That shulde kepe and rule this cyte
Harowe alas, here lythe my felowe slayne
What shulde I more of this tale sayne
The people out starte, and cast ꝑ carte to grounde
And in the myddel of the donge they founde
The dede man, that murdred was al newe.
O dyscful god, that arte so good and trewe
Lo, howe thou bewrayest murdre alway
Murdre wol out, that se we day by day
Murdre is so wlatsome and abhominable
To god, that so iuste is and resonable
That he ne wol it suffre healed to be
Though it abyde a yere, two, or thre
Murdre wol out, this is my conclusyoun.
And right anon, the myrusters of the toun
Haue hente the carter, and sore him pyned
And eke the hosteler so sore engyned
That they beknewe her wickednesse anone
And were hanged by the necke bone
Here may ye se, that dremes ben to drede.
And certes, in the same lefe I rede
Right in the next chapyter after this
I gabbe not, so haue I ioye and blys
Two men wolde haue passed ouer the se
For certayne causes, in to a ferre countre
If the wynde ne had be contrarie
That made hem in a cyte to tarye
That stode ful mery vpon an hauen syde
But on a daye, ayenst an euen tyde
The wynde gan chaunge, and blew as hem lest
Joly and glad, they went to rest
And caste hem ful erly for to sayle

But

But herken, to one mā syl a great meruayle
To one of hem, in slepyng as he lay
He mette a wonders dreme, agayn the day
Him thought a mā stode by his beddes syde
And hym cōmaunded, that he shulde abyde
And seyd him thus, if thou to morow wende
Thou shalte be dreynt, my tale is at an ende.
The woke, & tolde his felow what he mette
And prayed him his voyage for to lette
As for that day, he prayed him for to abyde
His felowe, that lay by his beddes syde
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him ful faste
No dreme (q he) may so my herte agaste
That I wol let for to do my thynges
I set not a strawe for thy dremynges
For swevens ben but vanytees and iapes
Men meten alday of oules and of apes
And eke of many a mase therwithal
And dremen of thing that neuer was, ne shal
But lythe I se that thou wolte here abyde
And thus slouthe wylfully thy tyde
God wote it rueth me, and haue good day
And thus he toke his leue, & went his way
But er he had half his course ylayled
I not why, ne what mischaunce it ayled
But casuelly the shyppes botome to rent
And shyp and men, vnder the water went
In syght of other shyppes besyde
That with hem sayled at the same tyde
And therfore layde Pertelot so dere
By such ensamples olde, mayste thou lere
That no man shulde be to recheleſſe
Of dremes, for I say the doutleſſe
That many a dreme ful sore is for to drede
Lo in the syle of saynt Kenelm we rede
That was Kenelphus sonne, the noble kyng
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thyng
A lyttel er he were murdred on a day
His murder in his vysyon he say
His nource him expowned it euery dele
His sweven, and badde him kepe him wele
For traylon, but he was but seuen yere olde
And therfore lyttel tale he therof tolde
Of any dreme, so holy was his herte
By god, I had rather than my shert
That ye had herde his legende, as haue I
Dame Pertelot, I say to you trewly
Macrobius, that writeth the auysyon
In Affryke, of the worthy Scipion
Affyrmeth dremes, and sayth that they been
Warnyng of thynges, that we after seen
And farthermore I pray you loketh well
In the olde Testament, of Daniel
Yf he held dremes for vanyte
Rede eke of Joseph, and there shal ye se
Wonders ben somtyme, but I say nat al
Warnyng of thynges, that after shal fal.
Lo of Egipte the kyng, that hight Pharao
His Baker, and his butteler also
Whether they felte none effecte in dremes?
Who so wol seke actes of sondrie remes
May rede of dremes a wonder thyng
Lo Cresus, whiche was of Lyde kyng
Wende he not that he, sate vpon a tree
Whiche signifyed he shulde honged be
Lo Adromeda, that was Hectors wyfe
That day that Hector shulde lese his lyfe
She dremed in the same night before
Howe the lyfe of Hector shulde be lore
Yf that day he went vnto batayle
She warned him, but it might nat auayle
He wente for to fyght neuertheleſſe
But he was slayne anon of Achilles
But that tale is to long to tel
And eke it is nigh day I may nat dwel
Shortely I say, as for conclusyon
That I shal haue of this auision
Adversyte: and I say farthermore
That I ne tel of laxatyues no store
For they ben venemous, I wote it wele
I hem defye, I loue hem neuer a dele
But let vs speke of myrthe, & stynte al this
Madame Pertelot, so haue I blys
Of one thyng god hath me sent large grace
For whan I se the beautie of your face
Ye be so scarlet reed aboute your eyen
It maketh al my drede for to dyen
For also syker, as In principio
Mulier est hominis confusio.
Madame, the sentence of this latyn is
Woman is mannes ioye and his blys
For whan I fele on night your softe syde
Al be it that I may not on you syde
For that our perche is made so narowe alas
I am so ful of ioye and of solas
That I defye bothe sweven and dreme
And with ꝑ worde he flew down fro ꝑ beme
For it was day, and eke the hennes al
And with a chuckle, he gan hem for to cal
For he had founde a corne lay in the yerde
Royal he was, and no more a ferde
He feddred Pertelot twenty tyme
And trad̄e her eke as ofte, er it was prime
He lokerth as he were a grymme lyoun

And on

And on his toes he ranne vp and doun
Him deyned not to set his foot to the grounde
And chucked, whan he had a corne ifounde
And to him thanne ran his wyues al
As royal as a prince in his hal
Lerne I this Chauntecleer, in his pasture
And after wol I tel of his auenture.
Whan ỳ monthe, in whiche ỳ worlde began
That highte Marche, that god first made màn
was complete, and passed were also
Sythe Marche began, twenty dayes & two
Befyl that Chauntecler, in al his pride
His seuen wyues walkyng him beside
Caste vp his eyen to the bright sonne
That in the sygne of Taurus was ironne
Fourty degrees & one, and somwhat more
He knewe by kynde, and by none other lore
That it was prime, & crew wt a blisful stevn
The sonne he sayd is clombe vp to the heuen
Fourty degrees & one, & somwhat more ywys
Madame Pertelot, my worldes blysse
Herken howe this blisful byrdes synge
And se the freshe floures howe they spryngе
Ful is myne hert of reuel, and solas
But sodaunly him fel a sorouful caas
For euer the latter ende of ioye is wo
God wote, worldly ioye is soone ago
And if a rethore coude faire endite
He in a cronycle myght saufely write
As for a souerayne notabilyte
Nowe euery wyse man herken to me
This storie is al so trewe I vndertake
As is the boke of Launcelot du Lake
That women holde in ful great reuerence
Nowe wol I turne ayen to my sentence
(A col fox, ful of sleyght and iniquite)
That in the groue had wonned yeres thre
By hygh ymagynacion a forne caste
The same nyght, thrugh the hedge braste
In to the yerde, there Chauntecleere the fayre
was wonte and eke his wyues to repayre
And in a bedde of wortes stylle he lay
Tyl it was passed vndren of the day
waytyng his tyme, on Chauntecleere to fal
As gladly done these homycides al
That in a wayte lye to murdre men
O false murdrer, ruckyng in thy den
O newe Scariot, and newe Genylon
False dissymuler, O greke Synon
That broughtest Troy vtterly to sorowe
O Chauntecler, accursed be the morowe
That thou in thy yerde flewe from ỳ bemes
Thou were ful well warned by thy dremes
That ilke day was perylous to the
But what ỳ god alone wote, must nedes be
After the opynion of certayne clerkes
Witnesse of him, that any clerke is
That in scholes is great altercacion
In this matter, and great disputacion
And hath ben, of an hundred thousande men
But I ne can not bolte it to the bren
As can the holy doctour Augustyn
Or Boece, or the bysshop Bradwardyn
whether that goddes worthy forewetyng
Streyneth me nedely to do a thyng
(Nedely clepe I symple necessyte)
Or ỳ the free chovce be graunted me
To do that same thyng, or do it nought
Though god forwote it, or it was wrought
Or ỳ his wetyng streyneth neuer a dele
But by necessyte condicioncle
I wol not haue to done of suche matere
My tale is of a cocke, as ye shal here
That tok his counsayle of his wife wt sorow
To walke in the yerde vpon the morowe
That he had met the dreme, as I you tolde
Womens counsayles ben ful often colde
Womans counsayle brought vs first to wo
And made Adam fro paradise to go
There as he was ful mery, and well at ese
But for I not, whom I myght displease
If I counsayle of women wolde blame
Passe ouer, I sayd it in my game
Rede auctors, where they trete of such matere
And what they say of women, ye may here
These ben the cockes wordes, and not myne
I can of women no harme deuyne.
Faire in the sonde, to bathe her merily
Lyeth Pertelot, and al her sustres by
Ayenst the sunne, and Chauntecleere so free
Songe meryer, than the Mermayde in ỳ se
For Phisiologus sayethe vtterly
Howe that they synge wel and merily
And so befyl, as he cast his eye
Among the wortes on a butterflye
He was ware of this fox that laye ful lowe
Nothyng than lyst hym for to crowe
But cryed cocke cocke, and vp he sterte
As one that was affrayde in his herte
For naturally, beestes desyreth to flye
Fro her contrary, yf he may it se
Tho he neuer erst had seen it with his eye.
This Chauntecleere, whan he gan him espye
He wolde haue fledde, but the fox anone
Sayd

hard gentil sir, alas: what wol ye done?
Be ye afrayde of me, that am your frende?
Nowe certes: I were worse than a fende
yf I to you wolde harme, or vilany
I am not come your counsayle to espye
But trewly the cause of my commyng
Was onely to here howe ye syng
For trewly ye have as mery a steven
As any angel hath, that is in heven
Therwith ye have of musyke more felyng
Than had Boece, or any that can syng
My lorde your father, god his soule blesse
And eke your mother, of her gentylnesse
Have in my house ben, to my great ease
And certes sir, ful fayne wolde I you please.
But for men speken of syngyng, I wol sey
So mote I brouken wel myn eyen twey
Save you, ne herde I never man so synge
As dyd your father in the morwynge
Certes it was of herte, al that he songe
And for to make his voyce more stronge
He wold so payne him, that with both his eyen
He muste wynke, so loude he muste cryen
And stonden on his typtoes ther withal
And streche forth his necke, longe and smal
And eke he was of suche discrecion
That there was no man in no regyon
That him in songe or wysedom might passe
I have wel redde dan Burnel the asse
Among his verses, how that there was a cocke
For that a preestes sonne yaf him a knocke
Upon his legges, whyle he was yonge and nyce
He made him for to lese his benefyce
But certayne there is no comparyson
Betwyxt the wysedom and discrecion
Of your father, and of his subtylte
Nowe syngeth sir, for saynte charyte
Let se, can ye your father counterfete.
This Chaunteclere his wynges gan to bete
As man that couthe not his treson aspye
So was he ravysshed with his flaterye
Alas ye lordes, many a false flatour
Is in your courte, and many a false lesyngour
That plese you wel more, by my fayth
Than he that soth sayth nat vnto you sayth
Redeth Ecclesiast of flaterye
Beware ye lordes of her trecherye.
This Chaunteclere stode hye vpon his toos
Stretchyng his necke, and held his eyen cloos
And gan to crowe loude for the nones
And dan Russel the fox starte vp at ones
And by the gorget hent Chaunteclere
And on his backe toward the wode him bere
For yet was there no man that hym sued
O destenye, that mayst not be eschued
Alas that Chaunteclere flewe fro the bemes
Alas his wyfe raught not of dremes
And on a friday fil al this mischaunce
O Venus that arte goddesse of plesaunce
Sithnes thy servaunt was this Chaunteclere
And in thy servyce dyd al his powere
More for delyte, than the worlde to multiplye
Why woldest thou suffre him on thy day to dye?
O Gaulfryde, dere mayster soverayne
That whan thy worthy kyng richard was slayn
With shot, complaynedest his dethe so sore
Why ne had I nowe thy science and thy lore
The friday for to chyde, as dyd ye
For on a friday, sothly slayne was he
Than wold I shew you how that I coude playn
For Chaunteclerees drede, and for his payne.
Certes suche cry ne lamentacion
Was never of ladyes made, whan that Ilion
Was won, and Pirrus with his bryght swerde
Whan he hent kyng Priam by the berde
And slough him (as sayd Eneidos)
As made al the hennes in the cloos
Whan they had lost of Chaunteclere the syght
But soverayntly dame Pertelote shright
Wel louder than dyd Hasdruballes wyfe
Whan that her husbonde had lost his lyfe
And that the Romayns had brent Cartage
She was so ful of torment and of rage
That wylfully in to the fyre she sterte
And brent herselfe, with a stedfaste herte.
O wofful hennes, right so cryed ye
As whan that Nero brent the cyte
Of Rome, cryed the senatours wyves
For that her husbondes shulde lese her lyves
Withouten gylte Nero hath hem slayne
Nowe wol I turne to my tale agayne.
The sely wydowe, and her doughters two
Herde the hennes crye and make wo
And out at the doore sterte they anon
And sawe the fox toward the wodde gon
And bare vpon his backe the cocke away
And cryed out harowe and wel away
Ha the fox, and after him they ran
And eke with staves, many a nother man
Ran Col our dogge, Talbot, and eke gerlonde
And Malkyn, with her dystaffe in her honde
Ran cowe and calfe, and eke the very hogges
For they so sore a ferde were of the dogges
And shoutyng of men, and of women eke

They ran so, her herte thought to breke
They yelleu as feendes do in hel
The dokes cryed, as men wolde hem quell
The geese for feare flewe ouer the trees
Out of the hyues came the swarme of bees
So hydous was the noyse, a benedicite
Certes Jacke Strawe, ne his meyne
Ne made neuer shoutes half so shril
whan that they wolde any Flemmyng kyl
As that day was made vpon the fox
Of brasse they brewe the trompes & of box
Of horne & bone, in which they blew & pou:
And therwith they shriked and shouted (ped
It semed, as though heuen shulde fal
Nowe good men I pray you herken al.

Lo howe fortune turneth sodainly
The hope and the pride of her enemy
This cocke that lay vpon the foxes backe
In al his drede, vnto the fox he spake
And sayd, syr: If I were as ye
yet shulde I say, as wyse god helpe me
Turneth ayen, ye proude churles al
A very pestylence vpon you fal
Nowe am I come vnto this woodes syde
Maugre your heed, the cocke shal here abyde
I wol hym eete in faythe, and that anone
The fox answerd, in fayth it shal be done
And as he spake the worde, al sodaynly
This cocke brake from his mouthe deliuerly
And high vpon a tree he flewe anon
And whan the fox sawe that he was gon
Alas (q he) o Chaunteclere alas
I haue (q he) do to you trespas
In as moche as I made you aferde
whā I you hent, & brought out of your yerde
But sir, I dyd it not in no wicked entent
Come downe, & I shal tel you what I ment
I shal you say sothe, god helpe me so.
Nay than (q he) I shrewe vs both the two
And first I shrewe my self both blode & bones
If thou begyle me ofter than ones
Thou shalte no more with thy flatery
Do me synge with a wynkyng eye
For he that wynketh, whan he shulde se
Al wylfully, god let him neuer thee.
Nay (q ỹ fox) but god yeue him mischāce
That is so indiscrete of gouernance
That iangleth, whā that he shuld haue pees
Lo, suche it is for to be recheles
And negligent, and truste on flatery
But ye that holde this tale a lye
As of a fox, of a cocke, and of a hen
Taketh the moralyte good men
For saynt Poule sayth, al that written is
To our doctryne it is written iwys
Taketh the fruyte, and let the chaffe be styl
Nowe good god, yf that it be thy wyl
As sayth my lorde, so make vs al good men
And bryngе vs to thy hygh blysse. Amen.

Here endeth the tale of the nonnes preest, and here folowеth the Manciples prologue.



Ir nonnes preest, our hoste sayd anone
Blessed be thy breche & euery stone
This was a mery tale of Chaunteclere
But by my trouthe, yf thou were a seculer
Thou wouldest be a treddoule a right
For yf thou haue corage, as thou hast might
Thee were nede of hennes, as I weene
Ye more than seuen tymes seuentene
See whiche brawnes hath this gentil preest
So great a necke, and suche a large breest
He loketh as a sperhauke with his eyen
Him nedeth not his colours for to dyen
With brasyl ne with grayne of Portyngale
But sir sayre fal you for your tale
And after that, be with ful mery chere
Sayd to a nother man as ye shal here.
Wote ye not where standeth a lytel towne
Whiche that is called Bob vp and downe
Vnder the blee, in Caunterbury way
There gan our hoste to iape and to play
And sayd, sirs: what dunne is in the myre
Is there no man for prayer ne for hyre
That wol awake our felowe before
A theefe him might ful lightly robbe & beare
See howe he nappeth, se for cockes bones
Howe he wol fal from his horse at ones
Is that a coke of London, with mischaunce
Do him aryse, he knoweth his penaunce
For he shal tel a tale by my fey
Al thought it be not worthe a botel of hey
Awake thou coke (q he) god yeue the sorowe
what eyleth the to slepe by the morowe
Hast thou had fleen al night, or art ỹ dronke
Or hast ỹ al night with som queen iswonke

So

So that thou mayste not holde vp thyn heed.
This coke that was ful pale, nothing reed
Sayd, sir host: so god my soule blesse
There is fal on me great heuynesse
But I not why, me were leuer to slepe
Than the best gallon of wyne in chepe
(Wel (q the Manciple) yf it may do ese
To the sir coke, and to no wight displese
whiche that here ryde in this companye
And that our host wyl of his curtesye
I wol as nowe excuse the of thy tale
For in good fayth thy visage is ful pale
Thyn eyen daze, sothely as me thynketh
And wel I wot, thy breth ful sowre stinketh
That sheweth wel thou art not wel disposed
Of me certayne thou shalt not be glosed
Se howe he galpeth, lo this dronke wight
As though he wolde vs swalow anon right
Holde close thy mouthe, by thy father kyn
The deuel of hel set his fote therin
Thy cursed breethe wyl infecte vs al
Fye shrinking swyne, lye soule mote the befal
Quoth hede sire of this lusty man
Nowe swete sir, wol ye ought at the wan
Therto me thynketh ye be wel shape
I trowe that ye haue dronken wyne ape
And that is whan men play at strawe.
And to his speche the coke wexed al wrawe
And on the manciple he gan to nodde faste
For lacke of speche down his horse him cast
where as he lay, fyl that men him vp toke
Thus was a fayre chenelaunce of a coke
Alas that he ne had holde him by his ladyl
And er that he ayen were in the sadyl
There was a great stouping to and fro
To lyfte him vp, and moche care and wo
So vnwieldy was this sely palled gotte
And to the Manciple than spake our host.
(Because that dronke hath dominacion
Vpon this man, by my saluacion
I trowe he telleth wol he tel his tale
For were it wyne, or olde moysty ale
That he hath dronke, he speketh so in his nose
And stynketh fast, and eke he hathe the pose
He also hath to do more than ynough
To kepe him on his caple out of the slough
And yf he fal from his caple efte sone
Than shal we al haue ynough to done
In lyftyng vp his dronken coree
Tel on thy tale, of hym make I no force
But yet Manciple, in fayth thou art to nyce
Thus openly to reprene him of his vyce
An other day he wol parauenture
Reclayme the, and bring thy to lure
I mene he speke wyl of smale thynges
And for to pynche at thy rekenynges
That were not honest, yf it came to prefe.
(No (q the Manciple) he were a grete mischefe
So myght he bringe me in to the snare
Yet had I leuer paye for the mare
which he ryderh on, than he should vn me stryue
I wol not wrathe him, so mote I thryue
That I spake, I sayd it but in bourde
And wote ye what, I haue here in my gourd
A draught of wyne, ye of a rype grape
And right anon ye shal se a good iape
This coke shal dronke therof, yf I maye
Up payne of my lyfe he wol not say naye
And certaynly, to tellen as it was
Of this vessel the coke dranke faste, alas
what nedeth it, he dranke ynough before
And whan he had poured in his hezne
To the Manciple he toke the gourde agayne
And of the dronke the coke was ful fayne
And thonked him, in suche wyse as he coude
Than gan our host to laugh wonder loude
And sayd: I se wel it is necessary
where that we goon, good dronke vs to carry
For that wyl turne rancour and disese
To accorde and loue, and many a worde to pese
O Bacchus, yblessed be thy holy name
That so canste turne ernest in to game
worshyp and thonke be to thy deite
Of that matter ye get no more of me.
Tel on thy tale thou Manciple, I the pray
wel sir, (q he) herken eth what I say.

Here endeth the Manciples prologue, and here folowe th hys tale.

The Manciples tale.



Whan Phebus dwelled
here in erth adoun
As olde bokes make mé
cloun
He was the moste lusty
bacheler
Of al the worlde, and
eke the best archer
He slough Pheton the serpent as he lay
Slepyng agenst the sunne upon a day
And many a nother noble worthy dede
He with his bow wrought, as mé mow rede
Play he couthe on every mynstralcye
And synge, that it was a melodye
To here of his clere voyce the soun
Certes the kyng of Thebes, Amphion
That with his songe, walled the cyte
Coude neuer synge halfe so wel as he
Therto he was the semelyst man
That is or was, sythe the worlde began
what nedeth it his fetures to discryue
For in this worlde nas none so fayre a lyue
He was therwith fulfylled of gentrynesse
Of honoure, and of perfyte worthynesse
This Phebus, þ was floure of bachelerye
As wel in fredome, as in chyualrye
For his disporte, in signe eke of victory
Of Pheton, so as telleth vs the story
was wonte to beare in his honde a bowe
Now had this Phebus in his house a crow
Within a cage ifostred many a daye
And taught it speche, as men teche a iaye
Whyte was this crowe, as is a whyte swan
And counterfete the speche of euery man
He couthe, whan he shulde tel a tale
There was in al this worlde no nightyngale
Ne couthe, by an hundred thousande dele
Synge so wonderly mery and wele
Now had this Phebus in his house a wife
Which that he loued more than his lyfe
And nyght and day, dyd euer his diligence
Her for to plese, and do her reuerence
Saue onely, pf I the sothe shal sayne
Jelous he was, & wolde haue kept her fayne
For him were lothe, iaped for to be
And so is euery wight, in suche degre
But al for naught, for it auayleth nought
A good wife, þ is clene of werke & thought
Shulde not be kept in none auayte certayn
And trewly the labour is in vayne
To kepe a shrewe, for it wol not be
This holde I for a very nyrete
To spyl labour, for to kepe wyues
Thus writen olde clerkes in her lyues
But nowe to purpose, as I fyrst began
This worthy Phebus, dothe al that he can
To plese her, wenyng through such plesaunce
And for his manhode, & for his gouernaunce
That no man shulde put him from her grace
But god it wote, there may no man embrace
As to distrayne a thyng, which that nature
Hath naturally set in a creature
Take any bryde, and put him in a cage
And do al thyne entent, and thy corage

To foster

To foster it tenderly with meate and drinke
Of al dayntes that thou canste bethynke
And kepe it also cleanly as thou may
Al though the cage of golde be neuer so gay
yet had this bryde, by twenty thousand folde
Leuer in a forest, that is wyde and colde
Go eete wormes, and suche wretchydnesse
for euer this bryde wyl do his besynesse
To escape out of his cage whan he maye
his lyberte the bryde desyreth aye.

Let take a catte, & foster her with mylke
And tender flesche, & make her couche of sylke
And let her se a mouse go by the wal
Anon she weyueth flesche, & couche, and al
And euery deyntie, that is in that house
Suche appetyte hath she to eete the mouse
Lo here hath lust his dominacion
And appetyte fleeth discrecion.

A shewolfe, hath also a dyuelous kynde
The leudest wolfe that she may fynde
Or leste of reputacion, that wol she take
In tyme whan her lust to haue a make

Al these ensamples speke I by these men
That ben vntrue, & no thyng by women
for men haue euer a lyeryouse appetyte
On lower thyng, to perfourme her delyte
Than on her wyues, be they neuer so fayre
Ne neuer so trewe, ne so debonayre
Flesche is so newfangel, with mischaunce
That we ne conne in nothyng haue plesaunce
That sowneth vnto vertue, any whyle.
¶ This Phebus, whiche thought no gyle
Destroyed was, for al his yolye
for vnder him an other had she
A man of lytel reputation
Nought worthe to Phebus, in comparyson
The more harme is, it happeth ofte so
Of whiche there cometh moche harme & wo

And so befel, whan Phebus was absent
his wyfe anon hath for her lemman sent
Her lemman, certes that is a knauyssh speche
forgeue it me, and that I you beseche.
¶ The wyse Plato sayth, as ye mowe rede
The worde must nedes accorde with the dede
If men shulde tel properly a thyng
The worde muste cosyn be to the werkyng
I am a boystouse man, right thus say I
There is but lytel difference truely
Betwyxt a wyfe, that is of lyfe degre
If of her body dishonest she be
And a poore wenche, other than this
If it so be they werke bothe amys

But for the gentyl is in estate aboue
Shee shal be called his lady and his loue
And for that tother is a poore woman
She shal be called his wench, or his lemmā
And god it wote, myn owne dere brother
Men lay as lowe that one as that other
Right so betwixt a tyrielesse tyraunt
And an outlawe, or a theefe erraunt
The same I say, there is no dyfference
To Alysaunder was tolde this sentence
That for the tyraunt is of greater myght
By force of meyne, to slee downe right
And brenne house & home, & make al playn
Lo therfore is he called a capitayne
And for the outlawe hath but smal meyne
And may not do so great an harm as he
Ne bringe a countrey to so great mischefe
Men callen him an outlawe or a theefe.
¶ But for I am a man not vertuele
I wol not tel of vertes neuer a dele
I wol go to my tale, as I began.

Whā Phebus wife had sent for her lemmā
Anon they wrought al theyr lust volage
This whyte crowe, that hynge aye in ꝑ cage
Beheld their werke, and said neuer a worde
And whā hom was come Phebus ꝑ forde
This crowe songe, cuckow, cuckow, cuckow
what birde (qꝑ Phebus) what syngest thou
Ne were thou not wont so merily to synge
That to my herte it was a reioysyng
To here thy voyce, alas, what songe is this
¶ By god (qꝑ he) I synge not amys
Phebus (qꝑ he) for al thy worthynesse
for al thy beaute, and thy gentylnesse
for al thy songe, and thy mynstralsye
for al thy wayting, blered is thyn eye
with one of lytel reputacyon
Not worthe to the in comparison
The mountenace of a gnat, so mote I thryue
for on thy bed, thy wife I sawe hym swyue
what wol ye more ꝑ crow anon him told
By sadde tokens, and by wordes bolde
Howe that his wyfe had done her lechery
Him to great shame, and to great vyllany
And tolde him eft, he sawe it with his eyen
¶ This Phebus gan awayward for to prie
Him thought his woful herte brast a two
His bowe he bent, and set therin a flo
And in his yre he hath his wyfe slayne
This is the effecte, there is no more to sayne
for sorow wherof, he brake his mynstralsye
Bothe harpe and lute, getern, and sautrye

And eke he brake his arowes, and his bowe
And after that, thus spake he to the crowe.
¶ Traytour (q he) with tonge of scorpion
Thou haste me broughte to my confusion
Alas that I was wroughte, why nere I deed
O dere wyfe, o gemme, o stedfastheed
That were to me so sadde, & eke so trewe
Now lyest thou deed, with face pale of hewe
Ful giltelesse, that durst I swere itwys
O rakel honde, to do so foule amys
O troubled wytte, & yre recheleslie
That vnauysed, & rightes gyltelesse
O wantrust, ful of false suspection
Where was thy wytte and thy discretion
Oh, euery man beware of rehtynesse
Ne trowe no thyng, without strong wytnesse
Smyte not too sone, or thou were why
And be auysed wel and sadly
Or ye do any execution
Vpon your yre, for suspection
Alas, a thousande folke hath rakel yre
Fully fordone, & brought hem in the myre
Alas, for to sorowe I wol my selfe slo
And to the crowe, o false theef said he
I wol quite anon thy false tale
Thou songe whylom, lyke a nyghtyngale
Nowe shalt thou false theef, thy song forgon
And eke thy whyte fethers euerychon
Ne neuer in al thy lyfe shalte thou speke
Thus shul men on a traytour be awreke
Thou & thyn offspring euer shal be blake
Ne neuer swete noyse shal ye make
But euer cryen ayenst tempest and rayne
In token that through the my wife is slayne
And to the crowe he sterte, and that anon
And pulled of hys whyte fethers euerychon
And made him blacke, & reft him al his songe
And eke his speche, & out at doze him stonge
Vnto the dyuel, whiche I him betake
And for this cause ben al crowes blake.
¶ Lordinges, by this ensample I wol you pray
Beware, and take kepe what I say
Ne telleth neuer no man in your lyfe
Howe that an other mã hath dight his wife
Ye wol you hate mortally certayne
Dan Salomon, as wyse clerkes sayne
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge wel
But as I sayd, I am not techuel
But natheleslie, thus taught me my dame
My sonne, thinke on þ crowe a goddes name
My sone kepe wel thy tonge, & kepe thy frende
A wycked tonge is worse than a fende
My sonne, from a fende men may hem blesse
My sonne, god of his endelesse goodnesse
walled a tonge with tethe, and lyppes eke
For man shulde him auyse what he speke
My sonne, ful ofte for to muche speche
Hath many a man be spylte, as clerkes teche
But for lytel speche, spoken auysedly
Is no man shente, to speke generally
My sonne, thy tonge shuldest thou restrayne
At al tymes, but when thou doest thy payne
To speke of god, in honoure and prayere
The fyrst vertue sonne, yf thou wolt lere
Is to restrayne, and kepe wel thy tonge
Thus lerne children, whan they be yonge
My sonne, of muche speking muche yuel
(There lasse speking had ynough suffyced)
Cometh muche harme, thus was me taught
In muche speche, synne wanteth nought
wostu wherfore a rakel tonge serueth
Right as a swerde forcutteth and forkerueth
An arme or two, my dere sonne right so
A tonge cutteth frendshyp al a two
A tangler is to god abhominable
Rede Salomon, so wyse and honourable
Rede Dauid in his psalmes, rede Seneke
My sonne speke not, ne wyrk thy dedes derke
Dissimule as thou were deef, if þ thou here
The tangleres ben euery of perilous maner.
The fleming sayth, lerne if that thou leste
That lytel tangling causeth muche reste
My sonne, if thou no wicked word hast sayde
Thee dare not drede for to be bewrayde
But he that hath mysdayd, I dare wel sayne
He may by no way clepe his worde agayne
Thyng that is sayd, is sayd, & forthe it goeth
Though him repent, or him be neuer so loth
He is thral to him, to whom he hath sayde
A tale, for whyche he is no wyse yuel apayde
My sonne be ware, & be none auctour newe
Of tydynges, whether they be false or trewe
Where so thou come, amonge hye or lowe
Kepe wel thy tonge, & thynke on the crowe.

¶ Here endeth the Manciples tale, and here begynneth the Persons Prologue.

By that the Manciple had
hys tale ended
The sonne fro the south
syde is dyscended
So lowe, that it was not
to my syght
Degrees of fyue and twe
tye on hyghte
Ten a clocke it was, so as I gesse
For eleuen foote, a lytell more or lesse
My shadowe was at that tyme, as there
Of suche fete as my lengthe parted were
In fyue fete equally of proporcion
Therwyth the Moones exaltation
I meane Libra, alwaye gan ascende
As we were entrynge at the thropes ende
For which our hoste, as he was wont to gye
As in this case, hys holy companye
Gan in this wyse, lordynges everychone
Nowe lacketh vs no tale more then one
Fulfylled is my sentence and my decre
I trowe we have told a tale or fe
Almoste fulfylled is myne ordinaunce
I pray to god so yeue hym ryght good chaūce
That telleth this tale to vs lustely
Syr preest (q he) art thou a vicary
Or arte thou a person, say soth by thy fay
Be what thou be, breke thou not our play
For euery man save thou, hath told his tale
Unbokell, & shewe vs what is in thy male
For truely me thynketh by thy chere
Thou shuldest knyt vp well a great matere
Tell vs a fable anone, for cokkes bones
¶ This person hym answerde all at ones
Thou getest fable none told of me
For Paule, that writeth to Timothe
Reprueueth hem that wayuen soothfastnesse
And tracchen fables, and suche wrecchednesse
Why shulde I sowe draffe out of my fyst
When I may sowe wheate, yf that my lyst
For whych I saye, yf that ye lyst to here
Moralite, and of vertuous matere
And then, yf ye woll yeue me audience
I wolde full fayne at Christes reuerence
Done you pleasaunce lefull, as I can
But trusteth well, I am a sotherne man
I can not iape, rum, ram, ruf by letter
And god wote, ryme holde I but lytel better
And therfore yf ye lyst, I woll not glose
I woll you tell a lytell tale in prose
To knyt vp al this feest, and make an ende
And Jesu for his grace, wyt me sende
To shewe you the waye, in this voyage
Of thylke perfyte glorious pylgrimage
That hyght Hierusalem celestiall
And yf ye vouchsaue, anone I shall
Begyn vpon my tale, for whych I pray
Tel your aduyse, I can no better say
But nathelesse this meditacion
I put it aye, vnder the correction
Of clerkes, for I am not lerned
I take but the sentence, trusteth well
Therfore I make protestation
That I woll stande to correction.
¶ Upon this worde we have assented sone
For as it semed, it was for to done
To ende in some vertuous sentence
And for to yeue hym space and audience
And bad our hoste he shulde to hym saye
That all we, to tell his tale hym pray
Our hoste had the wordes for vs all
Syr preest (q he) nowe fayre mote you befal
Sayeth what ye lyste, & we shal gladly here
And with that word he sayd in this manere
Telleth (q he) your meditacion
But hasteth you, the sunne woll adoun
Beth fructuous, and that in lytell space
And to do wel, god sende you his grace.

¶ Here endeth the Persones pro-
logue, and here after fo-
loweth hys tale.



¶ Jeremi. vi. State super vias, et videte, et interrogate de semitis antiquis, que sit via bona, ambulate in ea et inuenietis refrigerium animabus vestris.

Ur swete Lorde God of heuen, wolde that no man shulde perysshe, but that we tourne al to the knowlege of hym, and to the blyssfull lyfe that is perdurable, amonesheth vs by the prophete Jeremye, that sayeth in thys wyse. Stande yon the wayes and seeth, and asketh of olde pathes: that is to saye, of olde sentences, whych is the good waye, and walketh in that waye, and ye shall fynde refreshynge for your soules. &c. Many be the wayes espirituels that lede folke to oure Lorde Jesu Christe, and to the reygne of glorye: Of whych wayes there is a full noble way, and full conenable, which maye not fayle to man ne to woman, that through fynne hath mysgone fro the ryght waye of Hierusalem celestiall: and thys waye is called penitence, of whych man shulde gladly herke and enquire wyth al hys herte, to wete what is penitence, and whych is called penitence, and how many maners bene of actions or werkynges of penitence, and howe many speces there bene of penitence, and whych thinges appertayne and behoue to penitence, and which thynges dystourbe penitence.

Saynt Ambrose sayeth, that penitence is the playnynge of man for the gylte þ he hath done, & no more to do any thynge for whych hym ought to playne. And some doctoure sayeth, Penitence is the waymentynge of man that sorroweth for his synne, and punyssheth hym selfe, for he hath myssdone. Penitence wyth certayne circumstaunces, is very repentaunce of a man that holt hym selfe in sorowe, & other payne for hys gyltes: and for he shalbe very penytent, he shall fyrst bewayle synnes that he hath done, and stedfastlye purpose in hys herte to haue shryfte of mouth, and to do satisfaction, and neuer to do thynge, for whyche hym ought more bewayle or complayne, and continue in good workes: or els hys repentaunce maye not auayle. For as saint Isodre sayeth. He is a lyer and a lyer, & no very repentaunt, that eftsone doth thinge, for which hym ought repent. Weppynge and not for to stynte to do synne, may not auayle: But nathelesse me shal hope that at euery tyme that man falleth, be it neuer so ofte, that he maye aryse through penaunce, yf he haue grace: but certaynye it is great doute, for as sayeth saynt Gregorye. Unnethes aryseth he out of synne that is charged wyth þ charge of euel vsage.

And

And therfore repentaunt folke, that stynt for to synne, and leue synne or synne leue them, holy churche holdeth them syker of theyr salvacion. And he that synneth, and hereby repenteth hym in hys laste ende: holy churche yet hopeth hys salvacion, by the great mercye of our Lorde Jesu Christ, for hys repentaunce: but take the syker waye.

¶ And nowe syth I haue declared you, what thynge is Penitence, now ye shal understãd, that there ben thre actions of penitence. The fyrst is, that a man be baptysed after that he hath synned. Saynt Iustyn sayeth, but he be penitent for hys olde synfull lyfe, he maye not begynne the newe clene lyfe: For certes yf he be baptysed wythout penitence of hys olde gylte, he retayneth the marke of baptyme, but not the grace ne the remyssyon of hys synnes, tyll he haue very repentaunce. An other defaute is thys, that men do deedly synne after that they haue receyued baptysme. The thyrde defaute is thys, that men fall in venyall synnes after her baptysme, fro day to day. Therof sayeth saynt Augustyne, that penitence of good and humble folke, is the penitence of euery daye.

The speces of penitence ben thre: That one of hem is solempne: an other is cõmune, & the thyrd is pryuy. That penaūce that is solempne is in two maners: As to be put out of holy churche in lent, for slaughter of chyldren, and suche maner thynge. An other is when a man hath synned openly, of whyche synne the fame is openly spoken in the countrey: and then holy church by iugement, dystrayneth hym for to do open penaunce.

Cõmen penaunce is, that preestes enioyne men in certayne case: as for to go pertaueture naked in pylgrymage, or barefote. Pryuy penaunce is that, that men do al daye for pryuy synnes, of whych we shryue vs pryuely, and receyue pryuy penaunce.

¶ Nowe shalt thou vnderstande, what is behouefull and necessarye to very perfyte penytence: and thys stonte on thre thynges. Contricion of herte, confession of mouthe, and satisfaction. For whych sayeth saynt John Chrisostome. Penitence dystrayneth a man to accepte benignely euery payne, that hym is enioyned, wyth contricion of herte, and shryfte of mouthe, wyth satisfaction: and in werkynge of all maner humilite. And thys is frutefull penitence ayenst thre thynges, in whyche we wrath our Lorde Jesu Christe: thys is to saye: By delyte in thynkynge, by recheleshesse in speakinge, and by wycked synfull werkynge. And ayenst these wycked gyltes is penitence, that maye be lykened vn to a tree.

The roote of thys tree is contricion, that hydeth hym in the herte of hym that is verye repentaūt, eyght as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the earth. Of thys roote of contricion spryngeth a stalke, that beareth braunches & leues of confessyon, and frute of satisfaction. For whych Christ sayth in hys gospel. Doth digne fruyte of penitence, for by thys fruyte men maye knowe the tre, and not by the rote that is hyde in the herte of man, ne by the braunches, ne the leues of confession. And therfore our Lorde Jesu Christ sayeth thus: By the fruyte of hem shall ye knowe hem. Of thys roote also spryngeth a sede of grace, the whych sede is mother of all sykernesse, and thys sede is egre & hote. The grace of thys sede spryngeth of God, through remembraunce of the daye of dome, and on the paynes of hell. Of thys mater sayeth Salomon, that in the drede of God, man forleteth hys synne. The heate of thys sede is the loue of God, and the desyrynge of the loye perdurable: Thys hete draweth the herte of man to God, and doth hym hate hys synne: For sothly there is nothynge that sauoureth so well to a chyld, as the mylke of hys nourrice, ne nothynge is to hym more abhominable then that mylke, whe it is medled wyth other meate. Eyght so the synfull man that loueth hys synne, hym semeth that it is to hym moost swete of any thynge, but fro that tyme he loueth sadlye our Lorde Jesu Christe, and desyreth the lyfe perdurable, there is to hym nothinge more abhominable For sothly the lawe of god is the loue of god For whyche Dauid the prophete sayeth: I haue loued thy lawe, and hated wyckednesse. He that loueth God, keepeth hys lawe and hys worde.

¶ Thys tree sawe the prophete Daniell in spirite, on the vysyon of Nabuchodonosor, when he counsayled hym to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of lyfe, to hem that it receyue, and he that holdeth hym in very penitence is blessed, after the sentence of Salomon. In thys penitence or contricion, man

shall

shal vnderstand foure thynges, that is to say what is contrityon, and whyche ben the causes that moue a man to contricion, and howe he shulde be contryte, and what contricion auayleth to the soule. Then is it thus that contricion is the very sorowe, that a mā receyueth in hys herte for hys synnes, wyth sadde purpose to shryue hym, and to do penaunce, and neuer more to do synne: And thys sorowe shalbe in thys maner, as sayeth sayntt Bernarde: It shalbe heuye and greuous, and full sharpe and poynaunt in herte.

Fyrste, for a man hath agylted hys lorde and hys creatoure, and more sharpe and poynaunt, for he hath agylted hys father celestiall: And yet more sharpe and poynaunt, for he hath wrathed & agylted hym that bought hym, that wyth hys precious blonde hath delyuered vs fro the bondes of synne, and fro the cruelte of the dyuell, and fro the payues of hell.

The causes that ought moue a man to cōtricion bene fyue. Fyrste a man shall remembre hym of hys synnes, but loke that that remembraunce ne be to hym no delyte, by no waye, but great shame & sorowe for hys synnes. For Job sayeth, synfull men done workes worthy of confessyon. And therfore sayeth Ezechiel: I wol remembre me al the yeres of my lyfe, in the bytternesse of my herte And God sayeth in the Apocalypse: Remembre ye from whence that ye be fall, for before that tyme that ye synned, ye were chyldren of God, and lymmes of the raygne of God: But for youre synne ye be waxen thrall and foule and membres of the fende: hate of aungels, slaunder of holye churche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetual matere of the fyre of hel: And yet more foule and abhominable, for ye trespace so oft tymes, as doth an houde that returneth ayen to eate hys owne spewynge: and yet be ye fouler, for youre longe cōtinuynge in synne, and youre synfull vsage, for whyche ye be rooted in youre synne, as a beest in hys donge. Suche maner of thoughtes make a man to haue shame of hys synne, and no delyte. As God sayeth by the prophet Ezechiel: ye shal remembre you of your wayes and they shal displease you sothly. Synnes ben the wayes that lede folke to hell.

The seconde cause that ought make a man to haue dysdayne of sinne is this, that as sayeth sayntt Peter: who so doth synne, is thrall of synne, and synne putteth a man in great thraldome. And therfore sayeth the prophete Ezechiel: I wente sorowfull, in dysdayne of my selfe. Certes well ought a mā haue dysdayne of synne, and wythdrawe hym fro that thraldome and bylayne. And to what sayeth Seneke in thys mater, he sayeth thus: Though I wyste, that neyther God ne man shulde neuer knowe it, yet wolde I haue dysdayne for to synne. And the same Seneke also sayeth: I am borne to greater thynge, the to be thrall to my body, or for to make of my body a thrall Ne a fouler thrall maye no man ne woman make of hys bodye, then for to yeue his body to do synne, al were it ꝑ foulest churle, or the foulest woman that lyueth, and lest of value, yet is he then more foule and more in seruitude. Euer fro the hyghest degre that man falleth the more is he thrall, and more to God & to the worlde vyle & abhominable. O good God, well ought man haue great dysdayne of synne, sythe that through synne, there he was free he is made bonde. And therfore sayeth sayntt Austyne: ꝑ thou hast dysdayne of thy seruaunt, ꝑ he offende or synne, haue thou then dysdayne that thou thy selfe shuldest do synne. Take rewarde of thyne owne value, that thou ne be to foule to thy selfe. Alas wel ought they then haue dysdayne to be seruauntes and thralles to synne, and sore to be ashamed of them selfe, that God of hys endeles goodnesse hathe sette in hygh astate, or yeue hem wytte, strength of bodye, heale, beauty, or prosperite and boughte hem fro the deth wyth hys herte blonde, that they so vnkyndely agayns hys gentylnesse quyte hym so vylaynously to slaughter of her owne soules. O good God ye women that bene of great beautye remembreth you on the prouerbe of Salomon. He sayeth he lyketh a fayre woman that is a foole of her body to a ryng of golde ꝑ were wrone on the groyne of a sowe For ryghte as a sow wroteth in euery ordure so wroteth she her beaute in stynkyng ordure of synne.

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The thyrde cause that ought meue a man to contricion, is drede of the daye of dome, & of the horrible paynes of hel. For as sayntt Jerome sayeth: At euery tyme that me remẽbreth of the daye of dome, I quake: For whẽ I eate and drynke, or what so that I do, euer semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myne eare: Ryseth ye vp that bene deed, & cõmeth to the iudgement. O good God, moch ought a man to drede suche a iugement, ther as we shalbe al, as saint Poule sayeth, before ỳ sete of our Lorde Jesu Christe, where as he shal make a generall congregation, where as no man may be absent, for certes there auayleth none excuse ne excusation, and not only that our dedes shalbe iuged, but also that all our werkes shal opẽly be knowẽ. And as sayeth saint Bernarde there ne shal no pleading auayle ne no sleyght: we shal yeue rekenyng of euery vdell worde. There shall we haue a iuge that maye not be disceyued ne corrupte, and why? For certes, all our thoughtes bene discouered, as to hym, ne for prayer ne for mede, he shall not be corrupte. And therfore sayeth Salomõ: The wrath of God ne wol not spare no wyght, for prayer ne for yefte. And therfore at the daye of dome there is no hope to escape. Wherfore as sayeth saint Anselme: full greate angwyshe shall the synfull folke haue at that tyme: There shal ỳ fyerce and wreth iuge syte aboue, and vnder hym the horrible pytte of hell open to destroy hym that muste beknowe hys synnes, whych synnes openlye ben shewed before God & before euery creature: And on the lefte syde, mo dyuels then any herte may thynke for to hale & drawe the synfull soules to the payne of hel, and wythin the hertes of folke shalbe the byrnynge conscience, and wythout forth shall be the worlde al brennynge: whyther shal then the wretched synfull man flye to hyde hym? Certes he maye not hyde hym, he must come forth and shewe hym. For certes as sayeth saynt Jerome, the earth shall cast hym out of it and the see also, and the ayre that shalbe ful of thonder clappes and lyghtenynges. Now forthy, who so wolle remembreth hym of these thynges: I gesse, that thys synne shall not turne hym in delyte, but to greate sorowe, for drede of the payne of hell. And therfore sayeth Job to God: suffre lorde, that I may a whyle bewaile and wepe, er I go without returnynge to the derke londe, couered wyth the darkenesse of death, to the lãde of myserie and of derkenesse, where as is the shadowe of death, where as there is none ordre or ordynaunce, but ferefull drede that euer shall last. Lo, here maye ye se, that Job prayed respyte a whyle, to bewepe and wayle hys trespace: for sothly one day of respyte is better then al the treasoure of thys worlde. And for as moche as a man maye acquyte hym selfe before God by penitence in thys worlde, and not by treasoure, therfore shulde he praye to God to yeue hym respyte a whyle, to bewepe and wayle hys trespace: For certes al the sorowe that a man myght make fro the begynnynge of the worlde, nys but a lytell thynge, at regarde of the sorowe of hell. The cause why that Job calleth hell the lande of darknesse, vnderstandeth that he calleth it lande or earth, for it is stable and neuer shal fayle, and derke: for he that is in hell hath defaute of lyght material, for certes the darke lyght that shall come out of the fyre that euer shall brenne, shall turne hym all to payne that is in hell, for it sheweth hym to the horrible deuels that hym turmenteth, couered wyth the darkenesse of death, that is to saye, that he that is in hel, shal haue defaute of the syght of God: for certes the syght of God is ỳ lyfe perdurable. The derkenesse of death bene the synnes that the wretched man hath done wherche that destourbe hym to se the face of God, ryght as the derke cloude betwyxt vs and the sunne. Londe of myserie bycause that there ben thre maner of defautes, ayenst thre thynges that folke of thys worlde haue in thys present lyfe, that is to saye: honours, delyces, and richesse. Ayenst honoure haue they in hell, shame and confusyon: For well ye wote, that men call honoure the reuerence that man doth to man, but in hell is none honoure ne reuerence. For certes, no more reuerence shalbe do there to a kynge, then to a knaue. For whyche God sayeth by the prophete Jeremye: Those folke that me dyspise shalbe in dyspyte. Honour is also called great lordshyp: there shall no wyght serue other, but of harme & turment. Honoure is also called great dygnite & highnesse, but in hel shal they be al forrooden of deuels. As god sayeth

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the horrible deuels shall go and come vpon the heedes of dampned folke: and thys is for as moche as ỳ hyght that they were in this present lyfe, the more shal they be abated and defoyled in hell. Ayenst the rychesse of thys worlde shal they haue mysese of pouerte, that shal be in foure thynges: In defaute of treasoure. Of whyche Dauid sayeth: The ryche folke that embrase and knytte all her herte to treasoure of thys worlde, shall slepe in the slepynge of death, and nothynge ne shal they fynde in her hondes of all her treasoure. And more ouer the mysese of hel shalbe in defaute of meate and drynke. For God sayeth thus by Moyses: They shalbe wasted wyth honger, and the brydes of hell shal deuoure hem, wyth bytter death, and the gall of the dragon shall be her drynke, and the venym of the dragon her morsels. Also her mysease shalbe in defaute of clothynge, for they shalbe naked in body, as of clothynge, saue the fyre in whych they brenne, and other fylthes: & naked shall they be of soule, of all maner of vertues, whyche that is the clothynge of the soule. Where bene then the gaye robes, the softe sheetes, and the smale shertes? Lo what sayeth God of hem by the prophete Isaye, that vnder hem shall be strewed moughtes, and her couertures shall be of wormes of hell.

Also her mysease shalbe in defaut of frendes for he is not poore that hath good frendes, but there is no frende, for neyther God ne no creature shalbe frende to them, & eche of hem shall hate other wyth deedly hate: The sonnes and the doughters shall rebell ayenst father and mother, and ayrede ayenst ayred, chyde & dispyse eche other, both daye & nyght as god sayeth by the prophete Micheas: And the louynge chyldre ỳ whylom loued so fleshly eche other, wolde eche of hem eate other yf they myght. For howe shulde they loue to gyther in the paynes of hell, whē they hated eche other in ỳ prosperite of this life: for trust wel, her fleshly loue was deadly hate. As sayeth the prophet Dauid: who so ỳ loueth wyckednesse, he hateth his soule, & who so hateth hys owne soule, certes he may loue none other wyght in no maner: And therfore in hel is no solace ne no frendshyp, but euer ỳ more kynredes that ben in hel, the more cursynges the more chydynges, and ỳ more deedly hate there is amonge them. Also they shal haue defaute of all maner delyces, for certes delyces ben after the appetites of the fyue wittes: as syght, hearynge, smellynge, sauourynge, and touchynge. But in hell her syght shalbe ful of derknesse and of smoke, & therfore full of teares, and her hearynge full of waylynge and gryntynge of tethe: As sayeth Jesu Christe. Her nosethyrles shalbe ful of stynkynge. And as sayeth Isaye the prophete: Her sauourynge shalbe full of bytter gall, and as touchynge of al her bodyes, couered wyth fyre that neuer shall quenche, and wyth wormes that neuer shall dye. As God sayeth by the mouthe of Isaye: and for as moche as they shall not wene that they maye dye for payne, and by death flye fro payne, that maye they vnderstande in the wordes of Job, that sayeth: There is the shadowe of deathe. Certes a shadowe hath the lyknesse of the thynge of whych it is shadowed, but shadowe is not ỳ same thynge of whych it is shadowed: right so sayeth the payne of hel is lyke death for the horrible anguysshe. And why? For it paineth hem euer as though they shulde dye & none, but certes they shal not dye. For as sayeth saynt Gregory to wretched caytyfes shall be death wythout death, & ende wythout ende & defaute wythout fayling, for her death shal alway lyue, & her ende shall euer more begyn and her defaute shal not fayle.

And therfore sayeth saynt John the Euangelyst, they shal folowe death and they shall not fynde hym, and they shall desyre to dye, & death shall flye fro hem. And also Job sayeth that in hel is no ordre of rule. And al be it so, that God hath create al thynge in ryght order, and nothynge wythout order, but all thynges ben ordred and nombred, yet nathelesse they that ben dampned ben nothynge in order, ne hold none order, for the erth ne shal beare hem no fruyt. For as the prophete Dauid sayeth: God shall destroye the fruyt of the earth as for hem, ne water, ne shal yeue hem no moysture, ne the eyre no refreshynge, ne fyre no lyght. For as sayeth saynt Basilie: The brennynge of the fyre of thys worlde shal God yeue in hell to hem that ben dampned, but the lyght and the clerenesse shall be yeue in heauen to hys chyldren: ryght as good men yeue flesshe to her chyldren, and bones to her houndes. And for they shal haue none hope to escape, sayeth saynt Job at

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last, that there shal errour and grisly dreade dwell without ende. Horrour is alway dred that is to come, and this drede shal alwaye dwell in the hertes of hem that be damned. And therfore haue they lost all her hope, for vi. causes. Fyrst for god ỳ is her iuge shalbe without mercye to hem, and they maye not please hym ne none of his saynctes, ne they maye not gyue nothyng for her raunsom, ne they shall haue no voyce to speke to hym, ne they may not flye fro payne, ne they haue no goodnesse in hem, that they maye shewe to deliuer hem fro payne. And therfore sayeth Salomon: The wycked man dyeth, & whā he is deed, he shal haue no hope to escape fro payne. Who so than wolde wel vnderstonde the paynes and bethynke hym well that he hath deserued those paynes for his synnes, certes he shuld haue more talēt to sygh and wepe than for to synge and playe. For as sayth Salomon: whoso that had the scīēce to knowe the paynes that ben ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorowe. That science, as sayeth saynct Austyn, maketh a man to werment in his herte.

The fourth poynt that ought to make a man haue contrition, is the sorowfull remembraunce of the good that he hath lefte to do here in erthe, and also the good that he hath loste. Sothlye the good werkes that he hath left, eyther they be the good werkes that he wroughte er he fyll in deedly synne, or els the good werkes that he wrought whyle he laye in synne. Sothlye the good werkes that he dyd before that he fell in synne ben all mortifyed astonyed and dull by oft synnynge. The werkes that he dyd whyle he laye in synne be deed, as to the lyfe perdurable in heuen: than the good werkes that ben mortifyed by oft synnyng, whyche he dyd beynge in charite, may not quycken ayen without very penitēce. And of it sayth God by the mouth of Ezechiel: Yf the ryghtfull man returne ayen fro his ryghtousnesse and do wyckednesse, shall he lyue nay, for al the good werkes that he hath done shal neuer be in remembraunce, for he shall dye in his synne. And vpon that chapter sayth S. Gregorye thus, that we shall vnderstonde this principally: Yf that we don deedly syn, it is for nought than, to reherse or drawe in to memory the good werkes that we haue wrought before: for certes in the werkynge of deedlye syn, there is no truste in no good werke that we haue done before: that is to saye, as for to haue therby the lyfe perdurable in heuē. But natheleſſe the good werkes quycken and come agayne, and helpe and auayle to haue the lyfe perdurable in heuen, whan we haue contrition: But sothlye the good werkes that men do whyle they be in deedly synne, for as moch as they wer don in deedly syn, they may neuer quycke: for certes thynge that neuer had lyfe, maye neuer quycke: And natheleſſe, al be it that they auayle not to haue the lyfe perdurable, yet auayle they to abredge of the payne of hel, or els to get tēporall rychesses, or els that god wol the rather enlumyn or lyght the hert of the synful man to haue repentaūce, and eke they auayl for to vse a man to do good werkes, that the fende haue the lesse power of his soule. And thus the carters Lorde Jesu Christ ne wol that no good werke be lost for in somwhat it shal auayle. But for as moch as the good werkes that men done whyle they ben in good lyfe, ben all amortised by syn folowyng: & also syth that all the good werkes that men don whyle they ben in deedly syn ben vtterly deed, as for to haue ỳ lyfe perdurable: wel may that man that no good werke ne doeth, synge that frere Ichā de longe (Jay tout perdu mon temps, et mon labure). For certes synne byreueth a man bothe the goodnesse of nature, and also the goodnesse of grace. For sothlye the grace of the holye ghooste fareth lyke fyre that maye not be vyle, for fyre fayleth anon as it forletteth his werkyng: and ryght so grace fayleth anon as it forletteth his werkynge. Than leseth the synfull man the goodnesse of glory, that onely is beheyght to good men that labour and werke. wel maye he be sory than that oweth all his lyfe to God as longe as he hath lyued, & also as longe as he shall lyue, that no goodnesse ne hath to pay with his det to God, to whome he oweth all his lyfe: for trust well he shall yeue accōptes, as sayth saynct Bernarde, of the goodes that haue ben yeue hym in this present lyfe, and how he hath hem dispēded, insomoch ỳther shall not perysh an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre, ne shal not perisshe of his tyme, that he ne shall yeue of it a rekenynge.

The fyfth thynge that ought to moue a man to contrition, is remembraunce of the passion that our Lorde Jesu Chryst suffred for our synnes. For as sayth sayne Bernard whyle that I lyue I shall haue remembraúce of the trauayles that our Lord Jesu christ suffred in preachynge, his werynesse in trauaylynge: his temptations whan he fasted his longe wakynges whan he prayed, hys teares whan that he wept for pytie of good people, the wo, the shame, and the fyth that men sayde to hym: of the foule spyttynge that men spyt in his face, of the buffettes ꝑ men yaue hym: of the foule mowes, and of the reproues that men sayde to hym, of the nayles wyth whiche he was nayled to the crosse, and of all the remnaunt of his passion that he suffred for my synnes, and nothyng for his gylt. And ye shal vnderstond, that in mans synne is euerye maner ordre or ordynaunce turned vp so downe. For it is soth, that god, reason, sensualitie, and the body of man, bene ordayned that eche of these foure thynges shoulde haue lordshyppe ouer that other: as thus. God should haue lordshyppe ouer reason, and reason ouer sensualytye, and sensualitie ouer the body of man. But sothly whan man synneth, all this ordre or ordinaunce is turned vp so downe. And therfore than, for as moche as reason of man ne woll not be subiect ne obeysaut to god, that is his Lorde by ryght, therfore leseth it the lordshyppe that it shulde haue ouer sensualytie, and also ouer the bodye of man. And why: for sensualitie rebelleth then ayenst reson: and by that way ledeth reson the lordshyp ouer sensualitie and ouer the body: For ryght as reason is rebell to god, ryght so is both sensualitie rebell to reason, & to the body also. And certes this disordinaunce and this rebellion our Lord Jesu Chust bought vpon his precious body full dere: & hearken in what wyse. For as moche than as reason is rebel to god, therfore is man worthye to haue sorowe & to be deed. This suffred oure Lord Jesu Christ for man, after that he had be betrayed of his disciple, & distrayned and bound, so that his bloude brast out at euery nayle of his hondes, as sayth s. Austin. And ferthermore, for as moche as reason of man wol not daunt sensualite, when it may, therfore is man worthye to haue shame: & thys suffred our Lord Jesu chust for man, whan they spyt in his visage. And ferthermore for as moch thā as the caytif body of man is rebel both to reso & to sensualitie, therfore it is worthy death: & this suffred our Lord Jesu Chryst vpon the crosse, where as there was no parte of his bodye free withoute greate payne & bytter passyon: and all this suffred our Lord Jesu Chryst that neuer forfayted And therfore resonably maye be sayd of Jesu in this maner: To moch am I pained for thinges that I neuer deserued, and to moch defouled for shame that man is worthye to haue: And therfore may the synful man wel say, as sayne Bernarde. Accursed be the byternesse of my synne, for which ther must be suffred so moche bitternesse. For certes after the dyuers discordaunce of our wickednesse was the passyon of Jesu Chryste ordayned in dyuers thynges: as thus. Certes synfull mans soule is betrayed of the deuyll by couetyse of temporal prosperitie, & scorned by deceyte when that he chuseth fleshly desyres, & yet it is turmented by impatience of aduersitie, & despet by seruage & subiection of syn, and at the last it is slayne fynallye. For this disordinaúce of synful man was Jesu christ betrayed, & after ꝑ was he boúde, that came for to vnbynde vs of synne & of payne. Than was he despoyned, ꝑ only shuld haue be honoured in al thinges. Thā was his vysage that ought to be desyred to be sene of al mākynde, in which vysage angels desire to loke vylaynly despet. Than was he scourged ꝑ nothyng had trespalled, and finally thā was he crucifyed and slayne. Than was accomplished the wordes of Esay: he was woúded for our mysdedes, and defoyled for our felonies. Now sith that Jesu christ toke on him the paines of our wickednesses, moch ought synful man wepe and bewayle, that for hys synnes Gods sonne of heuen, should al this payne endure.

The fyrst thing that shuld meue a man to cōtrition, is ꝑ hope of thre thinges, that is to say forgyuenesse of syn, and ꝑ yefte of grace for to do well, and ꝑ glory of heuen vp which God shall rewarde man for his good dedes: and for as moche as Jesu christ geueth vs these yeftes of his largenesse

lac geneſſe ⁊ of his ſouerayn boũty, therfore is he called (Jeſus Nazarenus rex Judeorũ) Jeſus is to ſaye, ſauyour or ſaluacõ, on whom men ſhall hope to haue forȝeueneſſe of ſynnes, which that is properly ſaluacion of ſynnes. And therfore ſaid the angel to Joſeph: thou ſhalte call his name Jeſus, that ſhall ſaue his people of her ſynnes. And her of ſayth ſ. Peter: There is none other name vnder heuen ꝑ is yeue to any man, by which a man maye be ſaued, but only Jeſus. Nazarenus is as moche for to ſaye, as flowrynge in which a mã ſhal hope, that he that yeueth hym remyſſyon of ſynnes, ſhall yeue hym alſo grace well for to do. I was at the dore of thyne hert, ſayth Jeſus, ⁊ called for to entre he that openeth to me ſhal haue forȝeuenes of ſynne. I wyl entre to hym by my grace, ⁊ ſuppe with hym by the good werkes, that he ſhall do, whiche werkes ben the foode of the ſoul, ⁊ he ſhal ſuppe with me by ꝑ great ioye that I ſhal yeue hym. Thus ſhall man hope for his werkes of penaunce, that God ſhall yeue hym hys reygne, as he behyghte hym in the goſpell. Now ſhal a man vnderſtonde in whyche maner ſhall be his contrycion: I ſaye that it ſhalbe vniuerſall and totall, this is to ſaye: a man ſhalbe very repentaunt for all his ſynnes that he hath done in delyte of his thought, for it is ryght perylous. For there ben two maner of conſentynges, that one of hem is called conſentyng of affection, whan a man is moued to do ſyn, and than delyteth hym longe for to thynke on that ſynne, and his reaſon appercyueth ꝑ well that it is ſynne ayenſt the law of god and yet his reaſon refrayneth not his foule delyte or talent, though he ſe well apertlye, that it is ayenſte the reuerence of God, although his reaſon ne conſent not to do that ſynne in dede, yet ſaye ſome doctoures that ſuche delyte that dwelleth longe is ful perilous, albeit neuer ſo lytle. And alſo a man ſholde ſorowe, namely for all that euer he hath deſyred ayenſt the lawe of God, wyth perfyt conſentyng of his reaſon, for thereof is no doubt that it is deedly ſynne in conſentyng: for certes there is no deedly ſynne, but that it is fyrſte in mans thought, and after that in his delyte, and ſo forth into conſentynge and into dede: wherfore I ſaye that many mẽ ne repẽt hem neuer of ſuch thoughtes and delytes, ne neuer ſhryue hym of it, but onelye of the dede of greate ſynnes outwarde: wherfore I ſaye that ſuche wycked delytes bene ſubtyll begylers of them that ſhalbe dampned. Moreouer, man ought to ſorowe for his wycked wordes as well as for hys wycked dedes: for certes the repentaũce of a ſynguler ſyn, and not repentaunt of all his other ſynnes, or els repent hym of all his other ſynnes, and not of a ſyngular ſyn, may not auayle: For certes god almyghtye is all good, and therfore eyther he forȝeueth all, or els ryght nought. And therfore ſayth ſayncte Auſtyn: I wot certaynly that god is enemye to euery ſynner: and how that he that obſerueth one ſynne, ſhal he haue forȝeueneſſe of thoſe other ſynnes: Naye. And moreouer cõtrition ſhuld be wonder ſorowfull and anguiſhous, ⁊ therfore yeueth hym God playnly hys mercy: And therfore whan my ſoule was anguyſhed and ſorowfull within me, than had I remembraunce of God, that my prayer myght come to hym. Furthermore contrition muſt be contynuall, ⁊ that man haue ſtedfaſte purpoſe to ſhryue hym, and to amende hym of his lyfe. For ſothly whyle contrition laſteth, man maye euer hope to haue forȝeueneſſe. And of thys cõmeth hate of ſynne, that deſtroyeth both ſynne in hym ſelfe, and alſo in other folke at hys power. For which ſayeth Dauid: They that loue god hate wyckednеſſe: For to loue god is for to loue that he loueth, and hate ꝑ he hateth. The laſt thynge that men ſhal vnderſtande is this. Wherfore auayleth contrition. I ſaye the contrition ſomtyme delyuereth man fro ſynne: Of which Dauid ſayth I ſaye, ſayd Dauid: I purpoſed fermely to ſhryue me, and thou Lorde releaſeddeſt my ſynne. And ryght ſo as contrition auayleth not without ſad purpoſe of ſhrift if mã haue opportunyte, ryght ſo lytle worth is ſhryfte or ſatiſfaction without contrition. And moreouer contrition deſtroyeth the puiſſõ of hell, ⁊ maketh weake and feble all the ſtrengthes of the deuylles, and reſtoreth the yeftes of the holy ghoſt and of al good vertues and it cleenſeth the ſoule of ſyn, ⁊ delyuereth it fro the payne of hell, ⁊ fro the company of the dyuel, and fro the ſeruage of ſynne, and reſtoreth it to all goodes ſpirituels, to the companye and communion of holy churche.

Ferthermore it maketh hym that whylom was sonne of yre, to be the sonne of grace. And all these thynges ben proued by holye wrytte. And therfore he that wolde set hys entent to these thynges he were full wyse, for truly he ne shulde haue than in al his life corage to synne, but yeue his hert and body to serue Chryst, and therof do hym homage For truly our Lord hath spared vs so mekely in our follyes, that yf he ne had pytye of mannes soule, a lorye longe myghte we all synge.

Explicit prima pars penitentie et incipit pars secunda.

The seconde parte of penitence is confessyon, that is signe of contrition. Now shul ye vnderstōd what is confessyon, and yf it ought to be done or no, & which thynges be couenable to very confessyon. First shalt thou vnderstond þ confessyon is very shewyng of synnes to the preest: this is to saye very, for he must confesse hym of all the condicions that belonge to his synne, as ferforth as he can: al must be said, & nothing excused ne hydde, and not auaunt the of thy good werkes. Also it is necessary to vnderstonde whence that synnes spring, & howe they entre, and which they ben. Of the spryngyng of synnes sayeth saynt Poule in thys wyse: that ryght as by one man, syn entred fyrst into this worlde, and through syn deth ryght so the deth entreth into all men that synne, and this man was Adam, by whom synne entred into this world, whē he brake the commaundement of God. And therfore he that fyrst was so mighty that he ne shuld haue dyed, becam so that he must nedes dye whether he wolde or no, and all his progeny in this worlde that in the sayd man synned. Loke that in the state of innocency whē Adam and Eue were naked in paradyse, & shamed not therof, how the serpent wylyest of all other beastes that god made, sayde to the woman: why commaunded god you þ ye shulde not eate of euery tree in paradyse? The woman answered: Of the frute sayde she of the trees of paradyse we fede vs, but of the frute of the mydle tre of paradyse god forbod vs to eat & touche, lest we shuld dye. The serpent sayd to the woman. Nay nay, ye shall not dye of death, forsoth god woote that what daye that ye eat therof, your eye shall open, and ye shalbe as goddes, knowing good and harme. The woman thā saw that the tree was good to fedyng, and fayr to the eyen, and delectable to syght, she toke of the frute of the tree and ate, & gaue to her husbonde, and he ate, and anon the eyen of hem both opened: And whā that they knew that they wer naked, they sowed of frygge leues in maner of breches to hyde her membres There maye ye se that deedly syn hath fyrst suggestion of the fende as sheweth here by the adder, and afterwarde the delyte of the flesh, as sheweth by Eue, and after that consentyng of reason, as sheweth here by Adā. For trust wel though so it were that þ fend tempted Eue, that is to say the flesh, and the flesshe had delyte in the beautye of the fruit defended, yet certes yfil that reason, that is to say Adam, consented to the eatyng of the fruite, yet stode he in the state of innocence. Of the sayd Adam toke we the sayde original syn of hym fleshly descended be we all, & engendred of vyle and corrupte matter. And whan the soule is put in oure bodyes, right anon is contract original syn, and that that was erst but onely payne of concupiscence is afterward both payne and syn, and therfore we bene all borne sonnes of wrath, and of dampnatiō perdurable, if it were baptym that we receyue, whiche bereyneth vs the coulpe but forsoth the pyne dwelleth with vs as to temptation, which pyne hight concupyscence. This concupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordayned in man, it maketh hym couetye by couetyse of flesshe fleshly synne by syght of his eyen, as to erthly thynges, and also couetyse of heyghnesse by pryde of herte.

Now as to speake of the first couetyse that is concupiscence, after the lawe of our membres that were lawfully made, and by right ful iudgement of God: I saye for as moche as man is not obeysaunte to God, that is his Lorde, therfore is the flesh to hym disobeysaunt through concupiscence, whiche is called norysshing of synne, and occasyon of synne. Therfore all the whyle that a man hath within him the pyne of concupyscence it is impossyble but he be tēpted sometyme & moued in his flesshe to syn. And this thynge

maye

may not fayle as long as he lyueth. It may wel ware feble by vertue of baptim, and by the grace of god through penitence, but fully he shall it neuer quenche that he ne shall somtyme be moued in him self, but if he wer al refrayned by sycknesse or by malyce of sorcery or colde drynkes. For lo, what sayth s. Poule: the flesh coueteth ayenst the spyryte and the spyryte ayenst the flesh: they bene so contrary & so stryuen, that a man may not alway do as he wold. The same sayntt poul after his greate penaunce, in water, and in londe; in water by night & by day, in greate peryl and in great pyne. In londe, famyne & thurst, colde and clothlesse, & ones stoned almost to deth. Yet sayde he alas, I carfyle man, who shall delyuer me fro the puson of my carfyle body. And sayntt Jerom whe he longe tyme had dwelled in desert, where as he had no companye but of wylde beastes, where as he had no meate but herbes & water to drynk ne bed but the naked erth, wher fore his flesshe was blacke as an Ethiopien for hete and nye distroyed for colde. Yet sayd he that the brennyng of lechery boyled in al his body: wherfore I wot well that they be deceyued that saye, they be not tempted in her bodyes. Wy trusse sayntt James ỳ sayeth that euery wyght is tempted in hys owne consciece that is to say that eche of vs hath mater and occasion to be tempted of the norysshing of syn that is in his body. And therfore sayth sayntt John the euangelist: yf we say that we ben without synne, we deceyue our self, and truthe is not in vs. Now shall ye vnderstonde how syn wereth and increaseth in man. The first thing is the same norysshing of syn of which I spoke before, the fleshly cõcupiscence, and after that cõmeth suggestyon of the deuil, this is to say the deuyls bellous, with which he blowyth in mã the fire of cõcupiscence, and after that a mã bethinketh him whether he wyll do or no, ỳ thing to which he is tẽpted. And then yf a man withstõd & weyue the first entryng of his flesshe, & of the fende, thã it is no syn, & yf so be he do not, thã teleth he anon a flame of hete, & thã it is good to be ware & kepe him well, or els he wyll fall anon, to cõsentynge of syn, & than wyll he do it yf he may haue tyme & place. And of this mater sayth Moyses by the deuyl in this maner: ỳ fend sayth, I wyll chace & pursue man by wycked suggestyon, & I wyll take hym by mouyng and sterryng of syn, & I woll depart my pryse of my praye by delyberation, and my lust shal be accõplysshed in delyte: I wyll drawe my swoorde in consentynge. For certes, ryght as a swerde departeth a thynge in two peces, ryght so cõsentyng departeth god fro man, & than wyl I sle hym with my hond in dede of syn: thus sayth the fende. For certes than is a man all dede in soule, & thus is syn accõplysshed with temptation by delyte & consentyng: & than is the syn actual. Forsoth syn is in two maners, eyther it is venyall or deedly syn. Sothlye whan man loueth any creature more then Jesu Chryste our creatour, than it is deedly synne, & venyall synne it is, yf man loue Jesu chryst lesse thã him ought. Forsoth the dede of this venyal syn is full perylous, for it myrusheth the loue that man shuld haue to god more and more. And therfore yf a man charge hym selfe with many suche venyall synnes: certes but if so be that he somtyme discharge hym of hem by shryft They may ful lyghtly myrysh in hym al the loue that he hath to Jesu Chryst, and in this wyse skrypperth venyall synne into deedly syn. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with venyall synnes, the more he is enclyned to fall into deedlye synne. And therfore lette vs not be neglygent to charge vs of venyal synnes. For the proucrbe sayth that many smalle make a great. Herken this ensample. A greate bawe of the see commeth sometyme with so greate a vyolence, that it drowneth the shyppe. And the same harme do somtyme the smal droppes of water that entreth through a lytle creuys, not to the tymbre and to the botume of the shyp, yf men be so negligent, that they dyscharge hem not bytymes. And therfore although there be a dyfference betwyxt these two causes of drowninge, allgates the shyppe is drowned. Ryghte so falleth it sometyme of deedlye synne, and of anoyous venyall synnes, whan they multyplye in man so greatly, that those worldlye thynges that he loueth through why che he synneth venyally, is as great in his herte as the loue of God, or more: and therfore the loue of euery thing that is not beset in God, ne done principallye for Goddes sake, although that a man

loue it selfe then God: yet is it venyal synne and deedly synne whē the loue of any thyng weyeth in the hert of man as moche as the loue of God or more. Deedly synne as sayth sayncte Austyn is when a man turneth hys hert fro God: which that is very souerayne bounty that maye not chaunge: and gyueth his hert to a thyng that may chaunge & flit and certes that is euery thyng saue God of heauen. For lothe is that if a manne gyue hys loue whyche that he oweth to God, with all his hert vnto a creature: certes as moche of loue as he yeueth to that same creature so moche he bereueth fro God: & therfore doth he synne. For he that is dettour to God ne yeldeth not to god al his det that is to saye: al the loue of his hert. Now sith mā vnderstandeth generally whyche is venyall syn, then it is conuenable to tell specyallye of synne which that many a mā peraduenture demeth hem no synnes: & shryueth hym not of the same thinges: & yet neuertheless they be synnes sothly as these clerkes wryte that is to saye. At euery tyme that man eateth or drinketh more then sufficeth to ꝑ sustenaunce of his body in certayne he doth synne: & also when he speaketh more then it nedeth it is synne. Also when he herkeneth not benignly the complaynt of the poore. Also when he is in heale of body: and wol not fast when other folkes faste without cause resonable: also when he sleepeth more then nedeth: or when he cometh perchaunce to late to church: or other werkes of charite. Also when he vseth his wyfe without souerayne desyre of engēdrure to the honour of god: or for the entent to yelde to his wyfe dette of his body. Also when he wol not vysit the syeke or the prisoner: yf he maye. Also yf he loue wyfe or child or other worldly thyng more then reason requyreth. Also yf he flatter or blandyse more then him ought for any necessitye. Also yf he mynish or withdrawe ꝑ almesse of the poore. Also if he apparelhis meat more delicyously then nede is or eate to hastelye by lycorousnes. Also yf he talke vanytyes at churche or at gods seruyse, or that he be a talker of ydle wordes, of folye or vylanye, for he shal yelde accomptes of it at the daye of dome. Also when he behyghteth or assureth to do thynges that he may not performe. Also when ꝑ he by lyghtnesse or folye myssayeth or scorneth his neighbour. Also when he hath any wicked suspection of any thynge that he ne wot of sothfastnesse. These thinges and mo without nōbre be synnes as sayth s. Austyn Now shal men vnderstande that albeit ꝑ none erthly man maye eschue al venyal synnes, yet maye he refrayne hym by the brennyng loue ꝑ he hath to our lord Jesu christ and by prayers and confessiō & other good werkes, so that it shalbe but lytle grefe. For as sayth s. Austin: yf a man loue god in such maner, that al that euer he doth is the loue of god, or for ꝑ loue of god verely, for he burneth in the loue of god: loke how moch that one droppe of water whyche doth fal into a great furneys ful of fyre anoyeth or greueth the brennyng of the fyre: in lyke maner anoyeth or greueth a venyall syn vnto that mā which is stedfast and perfyte in the loue of our sauyour Jesu Christ. Ferther more mē maye also refrayne and put away venyall syn, by commenyng and receyuing worthely the body of our sauyour Jesu Christ. Also by takynge of holy water, by almesdede, by general confessyon of Confiteor at masse and at complyn, & by blessynges of bysshops and prestes, and other good werkes.

¶ De septem peccatis mortalibus, et de eorum dependentiis circumstantiis et speciebus.

NOw is it expedient to tel which bene the seuen deedly synnes, that is to saye, the chefetayns of synnes. All they renne in o lees but in dyuers maners.

Now bene they called seuen Cenes for as moch as they be chefe, & sprynge of al other synnes. Of the roote of these seuen synnes, then is pryde the general rote of al harmes For of this rote sprynigeth certen braūches: as ire, enuy, accidie or slouth, auarice or coueityse, to cōme vnderstanding glotony and lechery: And eche of these chefe synnes haue her braunches and twigges, as it shalbe declared in her chapiters folowynge. And though so be ꝑ noman can verely tel the nōbre of twigges, and of the harmes that com of pryde: Yet wol I shew a parte of hem, as ye shall vnderstonde. There is Inobedience

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maunteyng, ypocrisy, dispite, errogance, impedence, swellyng of hert, insolence, elation, impacience, strife, contumacy, presumption irreuerence, pertinacy, veyne glory, and many other twygges that I can not declare.

Inobedience is he that disobeyeth for dispyte the commaundementes of God & his souerains, and to his gostly father. Iuaunter is he that bosteth of the harme or of the boute that he hath done. Ypocrite is he that hideth to shewe hym such as he is, and sheweth hym to seme such as he is not. Dispitous is he that hath disdayne of hys neighbour that is to saye, of hys euyn christen, or hath dispite to do that hym ought to do. Errogance is he that thynketh þ he hath those bountes in hym that he hath not, or weneth that he shulde haue hem by hys desertes, or els that he demeth he is that he is not. Impedent is he, þ for hys pride hath no flame of hys pridenesse synne. Swellyng of hert is whan man reioyseth hym of harme that he hath done. Insolence is he that dispiseth in his iudgement all other folke, as in regard of his value, of hys conyng, of hys spekyng and of hys beryng. Elation is whan he ne may neither suffre to haue maister ne felow. Impacient is he that wyl not be taught ne rebuked of hys vice, and by strife denyeth reason wyttyngly, and defendeth hys folye. Contumace is he that throughe hys indignation is ayenst euery auctoute or power of hem that ben hys souerains. Presumption is whã a man vndertaketh an empryse that hym ought not to do or els that he may nat do, and this is called surquidie. Irreuerence is, whan manne dothe not honoure there as hym ought to do, and loke to be reuerenced. Pertinacye is whan men defende her folye, & trust to much on her owne witte. Vayneglory is for to haue pompe and delite in hys temporel hynesse, and glorye hym in worldlye estates. Janglynge is whan men spoke to much before folke and clapperth as a myl, and take no kepe what they say. And yet is there a prury spice of pride that wayteth fyrst to be saluewed or he wolle salue, all be he lesse worthy thã that other is. And also he wayteth or desyreth to sytte, or els to go aboue hym in the waye, or kysse pare, to be encensed, or go to offrynge before hys neyghbour, and such semblable thynges ayenst his dutie parauenture, but that he hath hys hert and hys entente, in suche a proude desyre to be magnyfyed and honoured before the people. Nowe bene here two maners of prides. One of hem is wythin the hert of a man, and that other is wythout. Of whych forsayd thynges sothlye and mo than I haue sayd apertayn to pride, that is in the hert of man, and other spices of pride ben wythout, but nathles, that one of these spices of pride is signe of that other, ryghte as the gay leuesel at the tauerne, is signe of the wyne that is in the celer. And thys is in many thynges: as in speche & countenance & outragious aray of clothyng: For certes, yf ther had ben no syn in clothing, Christ wold not so sone haue noted and spoken of the clothyng of the ryche men in the gospell. And as saint Greg. saith that precious clothing is culpable, for the derth of it & for his softnesse, and for hys straungenesse and disguysyng: and for the superfluite, or for the inordinate scantnesse of it. Alas, may nat a man se in our dayes the synfull costlye arraye of clothyng, and namely in to much superfluite, or elles in to disordinate scantnesse. As to the fyrst synne in superfluite of clothynge suche that maketh it so dere to the harme of the people, not only the cost of embrowdynge the disguysed endendyng, or barrynge, oundyng, palyng, wyndynge, or bendynge, and semblable wast of cloth in vaine. But there is also the costlye furrynge in her gownes, so much ponsynge of chesel to make hooles, so much daggyng of sheres forthe, with the superfluite in lengthe of the forsayd gownes, trayling in the donge & in the myre, on horse and also on fote, as well of man as of woman. That all that trayinge is verily as in effecte wasted, consumed thrydebare & rotten wyth donge, rather than it is yeue to the poore, to greate damage of the forsayde poore folke, & yn sothe wise, thys is to saye that the more the cloth is wasted, the more muste it coste the poore people for the scarsnesse. And moreouer, yf so be that they wold yeue such pounsed and dagged clothyng to the poore people, it is not conuenient to were for her estate ne sufficient to her necessite, to kepe hem fro the distemperaunce of the firmament. Upon that other syde, to speke of þ horrible disordinate scantnesse of clothynge

as ben these cutted sloppes or hanselines, þ through her shortnes couer not the shamful membres of mã, to wicked intent. Alas, some of hem shew the bosse of her shap, & the horrible swole membres that semeth like to malady of hernia, in the wrappyng of her hosé & also the buttockes of hem fare as it were the hynder parte of a she ape in the ful of the mone. And moreouer the wretched swollen mẽbres that they shewe through disguising in departing of her hosen, in white and reed semeth that halfe her shameful priuy membres were slayne. And yf so be that they departe her hosen in other colours as is white & blew, or whyte and blacke, or blacke & red and so forth: Thã semeth it as by variaũce of colour that þ halfe part of her priuy mẽbres ben corrupt by the fyre of saynt Anthony, or by canker, or other such mischaunce. Of the hynder part of her buttockes it is ful horrible for to se, for certes in that parte of her body where as they purge her fylthynge ordure, that foule partie shew they to þ people proudly in despite of honestie, which honestie that Jesu Christ and hys frendes obserued to shewe in her life. Now as the outragious arave of women, God wotte that thynghe þ visages of some of hem seme full chast, & debonayre, yet nothy in her arave or atyre, lecherousnes & pride: I say not that honestie in clothing of mã or woman is vnconuenable, but certes the superfluitie or disordinate quantite of clothynge is reprouable. Also the fyn of ornement or of apparayle is in thinges that apertayne to ryding, as in compayne, delicate horses that bene holden for delite, that ben so fayre, fatte, & costlye, & also in many a nyce knaue, that is suffered because of hem, in curious harneis, as in sadels, croperes, peytrels, & bridels couered wt precious clothing, & rich barres of plates of gold & of siluer. For which god sayth by zacharye the prophete, I woll confounde the ryders of such horses. These folke take lytel regarde of the riding of goddes sonne of heuen, and of hys harneys whan he rode vpõ the asse, and non other harneys but the poore clothes of his disciples, ne we rede not that euer he rode on other beest. I speke thys for the synne of superfluitie, and not for resonable honestye, whan reason it requireth. And moreouer, certes pryde is greatly notyfyed in holdynge of great meyny, whan they ben of lytle profyte, or of ryght no profyte, and namely whan that meyne is felonous and dammageous to the people by hardynes of hygh lordshyp, or by waye of offices. For certes such lordes fell thã her lordshyppe to the dyuel of hell, whã they sustayne the wikednesse of her meyne. Or els, whan theyr folke of lowe degree: as those that kepe hy steleries, sustayne these of the hosteliers, and that is in manye maner of deceytes: these maner of folke ben the flyes that folow the honey, or els the hounder that folow the cayn. Such forsaid folke strangel spyritually her lordshyps: For such thus sayeth Dauid the prophete, wicked death myght come on those lordshyps, and God geue that they might descend in to hel all down: For in her houses bene iniquities and wikednesse, and not god of heuen. And certes, tyll they bene amendement right as god vaue hys blessing to Pharao by the seruice of Jacob, & to Laban by the seruice of Joseph: Ryght so god wol yeue hys curse to such lordshyps as shall haue the wyckednes of her seruauntes, but they come to amendement. Pryde of table appereth also full ofte: for certes riche men ben called to feestes and poore folke bene put aware & rebuked. And also in excesse of diuers meates and drynkes, & namely such maner bake meates & delicates drynkyng of wylde fyre: peynted and castelled with paper and semblable waste, so that it is pytyon to thynke. And also in to greate pryuousnesse of vessell and curiosytye of mynstralcye, the whyche a man is stered more to delyces of lecherye, yf so be he sette hys herte the lesse vpon oure Lorde Jesu Christ certaynlye it is a synne. And certaynly the delyces myght be so greate in thys case, that a man myghte lyghtlye fall by hem in to a deadly synne. The eyeres that sourde of pride, eyther whan they sourde of maner ymagined, auysed, and forecaste, or els of vsage ben deedly syn, it is no doute. And whã they sourde by freelte vnauysed sodenlye & sodenlye wythdrawe aveyne, all be they gyuouse synnes, I gesse that they be nat deedly. Now might mẽ aske, wherof that pride sourdeth and spryngeth. I saye that for me it spryngeth of the goodes of nature, somtyme of the goodes of fortune, and sometyme

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of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature stondeth only in goodes of bodye, as goodes of ꝑ soule. Certes goodes of the body bene heel of body, strength, delinernes beautie, gentry, fráchise. Goodes of nature of the soule, ben good with sharpe vnderstá ding, subtel engin, vertue naturel, good me mory. Goodes of fortune, be ryches, hye de grees of lordships, playsyngs of the people Goodes of grace: bene science, power to suf fer spowell trauayle, benigne, vertuous cõ templation, vnderstanding of temptation & semblable thynges: of whych forsayd goo des: certes it is a full greate folye, a man to haue pride in any of hem all. Nowe, as for to speke of goodes of nature, God wot, that sometyme we haue hem in nature, as moche to our damage as to our profyt. As to speke of heel of body, truly it passeth ful lyghtly, & also it is full oft occasion of sickenesse of the soule: for God wot ꝑ flesshe is a great enemy to the soule: & therfore the more that the bo dys hole, the more be we in peril to fal. Al so for to haue pride in hys strength of body, it is an hie folye: for certes the flesshe coueteth ayenst the spirite: & the more strõg the flesshe is the sorer maye the soule be. And ouer all this strength of body & worldly hardinesse, causeth ful oft many man to perell and mis chaunce, & also to haue pride of his gentry, is right great folye: for oftyme the gẽtry of ꝑ body taketh awey the gentry of the soule: & also we ben al of o father & mother: & all we ben of o nature rotten & corrupt, both rich & pore. Forsoth o maner gẽtry is for to praise that apparelleth mánes courage: wyt vertue & morality, maketh him Christes chyld. For trust well that ouer what má that syn hath marstry, he is a very churle to synne.

Nowe ben there general signes of gẽtleines as eschewyng of vice & ribaudry, & seruage of syn: in worde, in werke, & countenaunce & vsyng of vertue, curtesy, & clennes, & to be li beral: that is to say, large by measure: for ꝑ ꝑ passeth measure, is folye & synne: Another is to remembre hym of boũtie, that he of o ther folke hath receiued: Another is to be be nigne to hys good subiectes, wherfore sayth Senecke: there is nothyng more conuenable to a má of hygh estate, than debonairte and pite. And therfore these flyes that men call bees, whan they make her hyngy, they chese one that hath no prycke, wherwyth he may stynge.

Another is, man to haue a noble hert & a diligent, to attayne to the hyghe vertuous thynges. Nowe certes, a man to haue pride in the goodes of grace, is also an outragi ous folye: for those gyftes of grace ꝑ shulde haue tourned hym to goodnesse, and to me dycen, tourneth hym to venym and confusi on, as sayth sayntc Greg. Certes also, who so hath pride in the goodnesse of fortune, he is a ful greate fole: For somtyme is a má a greate lorde by the mone, that is a catyfe, and a wretche or it be nyght: and somtyme the ryches of a man is cause of his death. Somtyme the delyces of a man, is cause of a grenous melady throughe whyche he dy eth. Certes, the comendation of the people is somtyme full false and brotell for to trust Thys day they prayse, to morow they bla me. God wot, desyre to haue cõmendation of the people, hath caused death to many a busye man. Nowe syth that so it is, that ye haue vnderstande what is pride, and which be the speces of it, and whence it sourdeth & springeth: nowe ye shall vnderstand which is the remedy ayenst it. Humilytie or mek nesse is the remedye ayenst pride, ꝑ is a ver tue through whyche a má hath very knowe ledge of hym selfe, and holdeth of hym selfe no price ne deyntie, as in regarde of hys de sertes, conseyderynge euer hys freelte. Now bene there thre maner of humilytes: As hu mylyte in herte, another humylytye is in mouthe, and the thyrde is in workes. The humilytie in herte, is in four maners: That one is, whan a manne holdeth hym selfe as nought worth before God of heuen. The seconde is, whan he dispiseth none other man. The thyrde is, whan he ne recketh nat though men holde hym nought worth. And the fourth is, whá he is not sory of his hu miliation. Also the humilitie of mouth is in four thinges. In a temperate speche, in hu militie of speth, & whá he cõfesseth with his owne mouth, that he is suche as him thynk eth, that he is in his hert: Another is, whã he prayseth the bounte of another man & no thyng therof munysheth. Humilitye also in werke, is in foure maners. The fyrste is, whan he putteth other men before him, ꝑ se cond is to chese the lowest place ouer al, the

thyrde

thyrde is, gladly to assent to good counsayle, the fourth is, to stand gladly to the awarde of his souerains, or of him that is in hier degre. Certeyn this is gret werke of humilite.

¶ De Invidia.

After Pride woll I speke of the foule synne of Enuye, whyche that is after the worde of the philosofer, sorow of other mennes prosperite. And after the worde of sayut Augustin: it is sorowe of other mennes wele, & the toy of other ménes harme. This foule synne is platly agaynste the holy ghost: al be it so, that euery synne is ayenst the holy gost: yet nathles, for asmoch as bounte apertayneth properly to the holy gost: & enuy cometh properly of malice, therfore it is properlye ayenst the bountie of the holy gost. Nowe hath malice two speces, þ is to say: hardines of herte in wickednes, or els the flesshe of a man is so blynde, that he considereth nat that he is in syn, or recketh nat þ he is in syn, which is the hardines of þ deuyl. That other spece of enuy is, whan that a mán deuyneth trouth, whá he knoweth that it is trouth, & also whá he repenteth þ grace that God hath yeue to his neyghbour: & all this is by enuy. Certes, thá is enuy þ worst sinne that is, for sothly al other sinnes be só time onely ayenst o special vertue: but certes, enuy is against al vertues & al goodnes. For it is sory ayenst al bountes of her neighbour, & in this maner, it is diuers from al other synnes. Alas: for there ne is any synne that it ne hathe some delyte in it selfe, saue only enuy, that euer hath in it selfe anguisshe & sorow. The speces of enuy ben these, there is fyrste sorowe of other mennes goodnesse and of her prosperite, & prosperite is kyndlye mater of ioye: Than is enuye a synne ayenst kynde. The seconde spece of enuye, is toy of other mennes harme, and that is properly lyke to the deuyll, that euer reioyseth hym of mannes harme. Of these two speces cometh backbytynge, and thys synne of backbytynge or detractynge hathe certayne speces, as thus: Some man prayseth hys neyghboure by a wycked entent, for he maketh alwaye a wycked knot at the last ende: alwey he maketh a but at the last ende that is digne of more blame, thã is worth al the prayseng. The seconde spece is, that if a má be good, or doth or sayeth a thynge to good entente, the backbyter woll turne al þ goodnesse vp so downe, to hys shrewde entente. The thyrde is to amynusshe the bountye of hys neyghbour. The fourth spece of backbytyng is thys, that yf men speke goodnesse of a man, than woll the backbiter saye: Perfay such a man is yet better than he, in dispraysynge of hym þ men prayse. The fyfth spece is thys, for to counte gladly and herke gladly to þ harme that men speke of other folke: Thys synne is ful great, and ayr encreseth after the wycked entent of the backbiter. After backbytynge cometh grutchyng or murmuration and somtyme it springeth of impacience ayenst God, and somtyme ayenst man. Ayenst God it is whan a man grutcheth ayenst payne of hel, or ayenst pouerte or losse of catel, or ayenst rayne or tempeste, or els grutcheth that shrewes haue prosperite, or els for that good mé haue aduersite: and all these thynges shulde men suffre paciently, for they come by the ryghtfull iudgement and ordinaunce of God. Somtyme cometh grutchyng of auarice as Iudas grutched ayenst Mawdelen, whan she anoynted the heed of our lorde Jesu Christe with her precious oyntment. Thys maner murmuryng is suche, as whan man grutcheth of goodnes that hym selfe doth, or that other folke done of her owne catel. Somtyme cometh murmure of pride, as whan Symon the pharisee grutched ayenst Mawdelen, whan she approched to Jesu Christ & wepte at hys fete for her synnes. And somtyme it sourdeth of enuy, whá mé discouer a mans harme þ was priuy, or bereth him on hand a thyng that is falsse. Murmure also is ofte among seruaútes þ grutche whá her soueraynes byd hem do lefull thynges, & for as much as they dare not openly wythsay þ cómaúdemẽt of her soueraynes, yet woll they say harme & grutche & murmure priuely for verry dispite: which wordes they cal the deuels pater noster, though so be that the deuel had neuer pater noster, but þ lewde folke yeueth it such a name. Somtyme it cometh of yre or priuy hate, þ nourysheth rancoure in the herte, as after warde I shall declare. Than cometh also bytternesse of herte, the

roote

tome whych bytternesse euery good dede of hys neyghboure semeth to hym bitter & vn-sauery. Than cometh discorde that vndyn-deth al maner of frendshyp. Than cometh scornyng of hys neyghbour, all do he neuer so well. Than cometh accusynge, as whan man seketh occasion to anoy his neyghbour whych is lyke the craft of the dyuel, ỳ way-teth both daye and nyght to accuse vs all. Than cometh malignitie, through whyche a man anoyeth hys neyghbour priuely if he may: and yf he may not, algate hys wycked will shall not let as for to brenne his house priuely, or empoyson or sle hys beastes, and semblable thynges. Nowe woll I speke of the remedye ayenst thys foule synne of en-uy. First is the loue of God principally, and louyng of hys neyghbour as hym selfe: for lightly that one ne may not be wythout that other. And truste well that in the name of thy neyghbour thou shalte vnderstande the name of thy brother, for certes all we haue one father fleshly & one mother, ỳ is to saye, Adam & Eue, & also one father spirituell ỳ is God of heuen. Thy neyghboure art thou bounde for to loue, & wyll him all goodnesse & therfore sayth god: loue thy neighbour as thy selfe, ỳ is to saye, to saluatiō both of lyfe & soule. And moreouer thou shalte loue hym in worde & in benygne admonyshynge & chas-tysyng, & comforte him in his nouaunces, & pray for him with al thy hert. And in dede thou shalte loue him in such wyse that thou shalt do to him in charitie, as thou woldest that it were done to thine owne person: and therfore thou ne shalt do hym no damage in wicked worde, ne harme in his bodye ne in his catel, ne in hys soule by entysyng of wic-ked ensample. Thou shalte not desyre hys wyfe ne none of hys thynges. Understande also that in the name of neyghbour is com-prehēded hys enemy: Certes man shal loue hys enemy by the commaundement of God and sothly thy frende thou shalt loue in god. I saye thyne enemy shalt thou loue for god-des sake by hys cōmaūdemēt, for if it were reason that man shulde hate his enemy, for-sothe god wolde not receyue vs to hys loue ỳ ben hys enemies. Ayenst thre maner of wrō-ges that his enemy doth to him, he shall do thre thynges as thus: ayenst hate & rācour of hert, he shal loue hym in hys hert: Ayenst chiding & wicked wordes, he shall praye for his enemy: Ayenst wicked dedes, he shal do him bountie. For Christe sayeth: Loue your enemies, & pray for hem ỳ speke you harme & for hem that chase and pursue you: and do bounte to hem ỳ hate you. Lo, thus cōmaū-deth vs our Lorde Jesu Christ to do to our enemies: For soth nature druyeth vs to loue our frendes, and parfay our enemyes haue more nede of loue than our frendes, & they ỳ more nede haue, certes to hem shall men do goodnesse. And certes in that dede haue we remembraunce of the loue of Jesu Christ ỳ dyed for hys enemyes: And in asmuche as that loue is more greuous to perfourme, so much is the more gret the merite, & therfore the louyng of our enemye hath cōfounded ỳ dyuels venym: for ryght as the dyuel is cō-founded by humilitie, right so is he wou-nded to the deth by the loue of our enemy, cer-tes thā is loue the medicyn that casteth out the venym of enuye fro mannes herte. The spyces of this place shall be more largely de-clared in her chapiters folowyng.

¶ De Ira.

After enuye wol I discriue the synne of Ire, for sothly who so hath enuye vpon hys neyghbour, anone he wol comenly fynde hym a mater of wrathe in word or in dede, ayenst hym to who he hath enuye: And as wel cometh ire of pride as of enuy, for sothly he that is proud or enuyous is lyghtly wrothe. Thys synne of yre, after the discryuynge of saynte Austyn is wycked wyll to be auēged by worde or by dede. Ire after the phylosopher, is the feruent bloude of mā yquycked in hys hert, through which he wolde harme to hym that he hateth: for certes the herte of man by eschaufynge and mouyng of hys bloude, wereth so troubled that it is out of al maner of iugement of rea-son. But ye shal vnderstande ỳ ire is in two maners, that one of hem is good, & that o-ther is wicked. The good ire is by zelousye of goodnes, through which a mā is wrothe with wickednes, & ayenst wickednesse. And therfore sayth a wise man that ire is bet thā playe. This ire is with debonairte and it is wroth without bitternes, not wroth ayenst the man, but wrath with the misdede of the man:

man: As saith the prophete Dauid: Iracimini, et nolite peccare. Nowe vnderstande that wicked ire is in two maners, that is to saye, sodayn ire or hasty ire wythout auysement & consentyng of reason: The meaning and the sence of this is, that the reason of a mā ne cōsent not to that sodayne ire, & than it is venyal. Another ire is ful wycked, that cometh of felony of hert, auysed and cast before, wyth wicked wyl to do vengeaunce, & therto his reason cōsenteth: and sothly thys is deedly synne. Thys ire is so displeasaunt to God, that it troubleth hys house, & chaseth the holy goste out of mans soule, & wasteth & distroyeth that likenesse of God, that is to say the vertue of that is in mans soule and putteth in hym the lykenesse of the dyuel, and taketh the man fro God that is his rightful lord. This is a ful great pleasaunce to the dyuell, for it is the dyuels fournayes that is eschauffed wyth the fyre of hell: For certes ryght so as fyre is more myghtye to distroy erthly thinges thā any other element ryght so ire is myghty to distroy al spirituel thynges. Loke how that fyre of smale coles that ben almost deed vnder asshen, woll renywe or quycke ayen whan they bene touched wyth brymstone, right so ire wol euermore quyck ayen whan it is touched by the pride that is couered in mans hert. For certes fyre ne maye not come out of nothynge, but yf it were first in the same thinge naturally: as fyre is drawe out of flyntes wyth steele. And ryght so as pride is many tymes mater of ire, ryghte so is rancour nourice & keper of ire. There is a maner tree, as sayth saynt Isodore, þ whan a man maketh fyre of the sayd tree, & couer the coles of it wyth asshen, sothly the fyre of it wol last a yere or more: And right so fareth it of rācoure whā it is ones conceyued in the hertes of some men, certes it wol last peraūcture from one Ester day vntyl another Ester day or more But certes that same man is ful ferre from the mercy of god al that whyle. In this forsayde dyuels fournes there forge three thynges: Pride that aye bloweth & encreaseth the fyre by chiding & wicked wordes: Than standeth enuy & holdeth bote vpon þ fyre vpon the hert of man with a payre of longe tonges of long rācour. And thā stādeth the syn of cōtumely or strife & chest, & batereth and forgeth by vilaynous reprefuinges. Certes this cursed syn anoyeth both to the man hym selfe & also hys neyghbour. For sothly almoost al the harme or damage that anye mā doth to his neighbour cōmeth of wrath for certes outragious wrath doth all that euer the foule fende willeth or cōmaundeth hym, for he ne spareth neither our lorde Jesu Christe, neyther his swete mother. And in hys outragiouse angre & yre, alas alas, ful many & diuers at that time, frieth in his hert ful wickedly both of Christ and also of al his halowes: Is not this a cursed vengeaunce certes. Alas it taketh fro mā his wytte & hys reason and all his debonayre spirituell that shulde kepe his soule. Certes it wythdrawth also goddes dewe lordshyp, and that is mans soule and the loue of his neighbours. It stryueth also all day ayenst trouth, it reueth him the quyete of his hert, & subuerteth hys soule. Of ire cōmeth eke stinkinge engendrures. First hate, þ is olde wrath discord, through which a man forsaketh his olde frend þ he hath loued ful long And than cometh werre and euerye manner of wrong that a mā doth to his neyghbour in body or in catell. Of this cursed syn of ire cometh also māslaughter. And vnderstand wel that homicide, that is manslaughter is in diuers wyse.

Some maner of homicide is spirituell and some is bodily. Spirituell manslaughter is in thynges. First by hate as sayth Sayntē Johan: He that hateth his brother, is an homicide. Homicide is also by backebytynge of whyche backebytynge sayeth Salomon, that they haue two swerdes, wyth whych they slee her neyghbours For sothlye as wycked is to take from him his good name as his lyfe. Homicide is also in geuing of wycked counsel by fraude as for to geue counsayle to areyse wrongfull customes and talages. Of whyche sayeth Salomon: A lyon rorynge and a beere hongry, be lyke to the cruel lordes in wythholdyng or abredgyng of the scrype or þ hyre of the wages of seruauntes or els in vsury, or in wythdrawyng of the almesse of poore folke. For whyche the wyse man sayeth Fede the hym that almoost dyeth for hunger, for sothly but if ye fede hym ye slee hym. And al these bene deedlye synnes. Bodyly manslaughter

slaughter is when thou sleest hym wyth thy tonge: In other maner is, when thou commaundest to slee a mā, or elis yeuest counsayle to slee a man. Manslaughter in dede is in foure maners. That one is by lawe, ryghte as a Justyce dampneth hym that is coulpable to the death: But let the Justice be ware that he do it ryghtfully, & that he do it not for delyte to spyll bloode, but for kepyng of rygh wysnes. An other homicide is done for necessitie, as when a mā sleeth an other in his defence, and that he ne maye none otherwyse escape wythout slaughter of hys aduersary, he doth synne, and he shal beare penaunce as for deedly synne. Also yf a man by case or aduenture shote an arowe or caste a stone, with wyche he sleeth a man, he is an homicide. Also yf a womā by negligence ouerlieth her child in her slepynge, it is homicide & deedly synne. Also when a man distourbleth conception of a chylde, and maketh a woman eyther barreine by drynkynge of venymous herbes, thorough wyche she maye not conceyue, or sleeth a chylde by drynkes, or elis putteth certayne materiall thynges in her secre places to slee the chylde, or elis doth vnkyndly synne by wyche a man or a womā sheddeth her nature in maner or in a place there as a chylde maye not be conceyued. Or elis yf so be that a woman hathe conceyued, and hurteth her selfe, and by that myschap the chylde is slayne yet it is homicide. What saye we of those women that murtheren her chyldren for bycause of eschewynge of worldly shame? Certes it is an horryble homicide. Homicide is also yf a man approche to a womā by desyre of lecherye, thorough wyche the chylde is perysshed, or elis smyteth a woman wetyngly thoughe wyche she leseth her chylde: All these bene homicides and horrible deedly synnes. Yet come there of yre mo synnes, as well in worde as in thought, and dede: As he that arretteth vpon God, or blameth god of the thynge of whych he is hym selfe gylty, or dyspyseth God and all hys halowes, as done the cursed hasardours in dyuers countreyes: Thys cursed synne done they, when they sete in her herte ful wyckedly of God & of hys halowes. Also when they treate vntrurtfully the sacrament of the aulter, that synne is so great that vnneth it may be released, but that the mercy of God passeth al hys werkes it is so greate and he so benygne.

Then commeth of yre an otterly anger, whē a man is sharpelye amonesshed in hys shryfte to leaue hys synne: Then woll he be angry and answere hokerlye and angerlye, or defende or excuse hys synne by vnstedfastnesse of hys flesshe, or elles he dydde it for to holde companye wyth hys felowes, or elles he sayeth the fende entyced hym, or elles he dothe it for hys youth, or elles his complexion is so contagious that he maye not forbeare, or elles it is hys destenye he sayeth vnto a certayne age, or elles he sayeth it commeth hym of gētylnesse of hys auncestors, and semblable thynges. All these maner of folke so wrappe hem in her synnes, that they ne woll not delyuer hym selfe: For sothlye no wyghte that excuseth hym selfe wylfullye of hys synne, maye not be delyuered of hys synne tyl that he meekelye beknoweth hys synne. After thys then commeth swearynge, that is expresse agaynste the commaundemente of God, and thys befalleth often of angre and of yre.

God sayeth: Thou shalte not take the name of thy Lorde God in vayne or in ydell. Also oure Lorde Jesu Christe sayeth by the worde of sayncte Mathewe: Ne woll ye not sweare in all maner, neyther by heauen, for it is goddes trone, ne by earth, for it is the benche of his feete, ne by Hierusalem, for it is the cyte of a greate kynge, ne by thyne heed, for thou mayste not make an heere neyther whyte ne blacke: but say by youre worde, yea yea, naye naye: and what that is more, it is of yuell. Thus sayeth Christe. For Christes sake sweare not so synfullye in dysmembrynge of Christe: By soule, herte, bones, and bodye, for certes it semeth that ye thynke that the cursed Jewes ne dysmembred not ynoughe the precyous persone of Christe, but ye dysmembre hym more. And yf so be that the lawe compell you to sweare, then ruleth you after the lawe of God in your swearyng as sayeth Jeremy the fourth chapter. Thou shalte kepe thre condicions, thou shalt swere in trouth, in dome & in ryghtwysenesse, thys is to saye, thou shalte sweare sothe. For euery lesynge is ayenst Christ, for Christ is euery trouth. And thynke well thys that euery great swearer not compelled lawfully to swere, the plage shal not depart fro his house whyle he vseth suche vnlawfull swearynge.

Thou shalte swere also in dome, when thou arte constrayned by thy domes man to wytnesse trouthe: Also thou shalt not swearе for envye, neyther for favoure, neyther for mede or rewarde, but onelye for ryghteousnesse & for declarynge of it to the honoure and worshyppe of God, and to the aydinge and helpe of thyne euen christen. And therfore euerye man that taketh goddes name in ydel, or falselye sweareth wyth hys mouthe, or els taketh on hym the name of Christe to be called a christen man, and lyueth ayenst Christes lyvynge and hys teachynge, all they take goddes name in ydell. Loke also what sayeth saynt Peter, Actuum.iiij. Capitu. Non est aliud nomē sub celo. &c. There is none other name sayeth sayne Peter vnder heauen yeue to men, in whyche they maye be saued, that is to saye, but the name of Jesu Christ. Take hede eke howe precious is the name of Jesu Christ, as sayeth sayne Paule, ad Philippen ses secundo. In nomine Jesu. &c. That in the name of Jesu euery knee of heauenly creatures, earthlye, and of hell shulde bowe, for it is so hye and so worshypfull, that the cursed fende in hel shulde tremble to heare it named Then semeth it that men that swearе so horriblye by hys blessed name, that they dyspyse it more boldely then the cursed Jewes, or els the dyuell that tremblerh whē he heareth hys name.

Nowe certes syth that swearyng, but yf it be lawfullye done, is so hyelye defended: moche more is forswearynge falsly, and yet nedelesse.

What say we also of hem that delyte hem in swearynge, and holde it a gentrye or a māly dede to swearе great othes. And what of hem ꝑ of very vsage ne cease not to swearе greate othes, all be the cause not worthe a strawe. Certes thys is horrible synne. Swerynge sodeynly is also a great synne. But let vs go now to that horrible synne swearynge of adiuration and conjuration, as done these false enchaūtours or nigromāciens in basyns full of water, or in a byrght swearde, in a cercle, in a fyre, or in the sholderbone of a shepe. I can not saye but that they done cursedly & dampnably ayenst Christe, and all the sayth of holy churche.

What say we of hem ꝑ beleue on Deuins les, as by flyghte or by noyse of brydes or of beestes, or by sotte, by Geomācye, by dremes, by chyrkynge of doores or crakynge of houses, by gnawynge of rattes, & suche maner wretchednesse. Certes al these thynges ben defended by god and holy church, for whyche they bē accursed tyl they come to amendemēt ꝑ on such sykth set her belyue. Charmes for woundes or maladye of men or of beestes, yf they take any effecte, it maye be peraventure that God suffreth it, for folke shuld yeue the more fayth and reuerence to hys name.

Nowe woll I speke of leasynges whych generally is falce signifyaunce of worde in entent to dysceyue hys euen christen. Some lesynge is, of which there cometh none auantage to no wyght, and some leasyng turneth to the profyte or ease of o man, and to the damage of an other man. An other leasynge is for to saue hys lyfe or hys catell, whych cometh of delyte for to lye, in which delyte they woll forge a longe tale, and paynt it with al circumstaunces, where al the tale of ꝑ grounde is false. Some leasynge cometh for he woll flatteyne hys wordes: Some leasyng cometh of recheleshnesse wythout auysemēt, and sem blable thynges. Lette vs nowe touche the vyce of flatterye, whyche ne cometh not gladlye but for drede, or for couetyse. Flatterye is generally wronful playsynge. Flatterers bene the dyuels nourryces, that nourrish hys children with mylke of iolyngertye: For lock Salomon sayeth that flatery is worse then detraction, for sometyme detractiō maketh an hauteyne man be the more humble for he dreadeth detraction, but certes flatterye maketh a man enhaunce hys herte and countenaunce. Flatterers be ꝑ deuels enchautours, for they make a man to wene hym selfe be lyke, that he is not lyke. Those be lyke to Judas that betraye a man to sell hym to hys enemy. Flatterers ben the dyuels chapleyns ꝑ euer singe Placebo. I reken flatery in the vyces of yre for ofte tyme yf a man be wrothe wyth another, then woll he flater some wyght to sustayne hym in hys quarell. Speake we nowe of suche cursynge as cometh of yrous herte. Balyson generally maye be sayd euery maner power of harme: Such cursing berreueth man fro the raygne of God, as sayeth sayne Poule. And oft tyme such cursyng wrongfully returneth ayen to hym that curseth, as byrd that returneth ayen to hys owne nesse. And

euer

uer all thynge men ought eschewe to curse her chyldren and yeue to the deuel her engen dure as farre forth as in hem is: certes it is great peryll and great synne. Lette vs then speake of chydynge and reproche, whych ben full great woundes in más herte, for they vn sowe the semes of frendshyp in mans herte: for certes vnneth maye a man be playnly be accorded wyth hym, that hym openly hath re uyled and reproued, and dyslaundred: Thys is a full gastly synne as Christe saieth in the gospell. And take hede nowe that he that re proueth hys neyghboure eyther he reproueth hym by some harme of paine that he hath vp pon hys body as meselry, croked, harlot, or by some synne that he doth. Now yf he reproue hym by harme of payne, then turneth the re proche to Jesu Christ: For payne is sende by the ryghtwyse sonde of God, and by hys suf frarnce, be it meselry, meyme, or maladye: And yf he reproue him vncharitably of synne as thou holour, thou dronkelewe harlot, and so forth: Then pertayneth that to the reioy synge of the deuell, whyche euer hath ioye þ men done synne. And certes chydynge maye not come but of vylayneous hert, for after the habundaunce of the herte speaketh þ mouth full ofte. And ye shal vnderstande, that loke by any waye when any man shall chastyse or correct another, that he beware frō chydyng or reprouynge: for truely but he beware, he maye full lyghtly quycken the fyre of angre and of wroth, whych he shulde quenche: And peraduenture sleeth him whych he myght cha styse wyth benignite. For as saieth Salomō The amiable tonge is the tree of lyfe that is to saye of lyfe spirituell. And sothlye a dis o lute tonge sleeth the spirites of hym that re proueth, and also of hym whych is reproued Lo, what saieth saynt Augustyne: There is nothynge so lyke the dyuels chylde, as he whych ofte chydeth.

A seruaunt of God behoueth not to chyde Al though that chydynge be a vyllainous thynge betwyxte all maner folke, yet it is cer tes moost vncouenable betwene a man and hys wyfe, for there is neuer reste. And ther fore saieth Salomon: In house that is vncouered and droppynge and a chydynge wyfe, ben a lyke.

A man whych is in a droppynge house in many places, though he eschewe the drop pynge in one place, it droppeth on hym in an other place: So fareth it by a chydynge wyfe, yf she chyde hym in one place she woll chyde hym in another: And therfore better and greatly more pleasaunt is a morsell of ly tell gobet of bread wyth ioye, then an house fylled full of delyces wyth chydynge & gner synge, saieth Salomon. Saynt Poule say eth: O ye women, beth ye subiecte to youre husbandes, as you behoueth and ought in God: And ye mē loueth your wyues, ad Co lossenses iij.

Afterwarde speke we of scornyng whych is a wycked synne, and namely when he scor neth a man for hys good werkes: For certes suche scorners fare lyke the foule tode, that maye not endure to smell þ swete sauoure of the byne whē it flourysheth. These scorners bene partynge felowes wyth the dyuell, for they haue ioye whē the dyuell wynneth and sorowe yf he leseth. They ben aduersaryes of Jesu Christ, for they hate that he loueth, that is to saye, saluation of soule.

Speake we nowe of wycked counsayle, þ whych is a traytoure, for he discouereth hym that trusteth in hym: Vt Achitofel ad Salo monem. But natheless, yet is hys wycked counsayle fyrst ayenst hym selfe, for as saieth the wyse man: euery false lyuynge hath this properte in hym selfe, that he that wol anoye another man, he anoyeth fyrst hym selfe. And men shall vnderstande, that man shall not take hys counsayle of false folke, ne of an gry folke, or greuous folke, ne of folke that loue specially to moche worldly folke, name ly in counsaylynge of soules.

Nowe cometh the synne of hem that sowe and make dyscorde amonge folke, whyche is a synne that Christ hateth vtterly, & no won der is: for he deyde for to make concorde. And more shame do they to Christe then dyd they that hym crucifyed: For God loueth better that frendshyp be amonges folke then he dyd hys owne body, which that he gaue for vnite Therfore ben they lykened to the dyuell that euer be aboute to make dyscorde. Nowe com meth the synne of double tōge, such as speke fayre before folke, and wyckedly behynde, or els they make semblaūt as though they spak of good entencion, or els in game and playe, and yet they speake of wycked entent.

Nowe cometh bewrayenge of counsayle,

throughe whyche a man is dyffamed: Certes vneth maye he restore the domage. Nowe cometh menace, that is an open folye, for he that ofte menaceth, he threateth more then he maye performe full ofte tyme. Nowe cometh ydell wordes, that is wythout profyte of hym that speaketh the wordes, and also of hym that herkeneth the wordes: Dr els ydel wordes ben those that ben nedelesse or wyth out entent of naturall profyte. And all be it that ydell wordes be somtyme venyall synne yet shulde men doute hem, for we shall yeue rekenynge of hem before God. Nowe cometh langlynge that maye not be wythout synne. And as sayeth Salomon: it is a sygne of a perte folye. And therfore a philosopher sayde when men asked hym howe that he shulde please the people, he answerde: Do many good workes and speake few vanities. After this cometh the synne of iaperies, that ben þ deuels apes, for they make folke to laughe at her iaperye, as folke do at the gaudes of an ape: wherch iapes defendeth sayut Paule. Loke howe that vertuous wordes and holy comforte hem that trauayle in the seruyce of Christ: Ryght so comforteth the villaynous wordes and knackes of iapers hem that trauayle in the seruyce of the deuell. These bene the synnes of the tonge, that come of yre and of other synnes.

The remedy ayenst Ire

The remedy ayenst Ire, is a vertue that men cal Mansuetude, that is Debonairte, and also another vertue that men clepe Pacience or sufferaunce. Debonayre wythdraweth and refrayneth the sterynges and mouynges of mannes corage in herte, in suche maner that they ne skyppe not out by anger ne yre. Sufferaunce suffereth swetely all the anoyaunces and wronges þ men done to man outwarde. Sayut Jerome sayeth thys of debonairte, þ it doth no harme to no wyght, ne sayeth: ne for no harme that men do ne saye, he ne chafeth ayenst reason. Thys vertue somtyme cometh of nature: for as sayeth the philosopher, A man is a quycke thynge by nature, debonayre and tretable to goodnesse: but when debonairte is enformed of grace, then it is the more worth.

Pacience is another remedye ayenst ire, & is a vertue that suffereth swetely euery mannes goodnesse, & is not wroth for no harme that is done to hym. The philosopher sayeth that pacience is the vertue that suffereth debonairly all the outrages of aduersite, and euerye wycked worde. Thys vertue maketh a man lyke to God, and maketh hym goddes owne chylde: as sayeth Christ. Thys vertue dyscomfyteth thyne enemye. And therfore sayeth the wyse man: yf thou woldе vanquyche thyne enemye learne to suffre. And thou shalte vnderstande that a man suffreth foure maner of greuaunces in outward thynges ayenst the whyche foure he muste haue foure maner of pacences.

The fyrst greuaunce is of wycked wordes whyche suffred Jesu Christe wythout grutchynge full pacientlу, when the Jewes dyspysed hym full ofte. Suffre thou therfore pacientlу, for the wyse man sayeth: yf thou stryue with a foole, though þ foole be wroth or though he laugh, alwaye thou shalte haue no reste. That other greuaunce outwarde is to haue domage of thy catell: There ayenst suffred Christ full pacientlу, whe he was dispoyled of al that he had in thys lyfe, and that was but hys clothes. The thyrde greuaunce is a man to haue harme in hys body: That suffred Christ full pacientlу in al his passion The fourth greuaunce is in outragious labourе in werkes, wherfore I saye, that folke that make her seruauntes to trauayle to greuously or out of tyme, as in holy dayes, forby they do great synne. Here ayenst suffered Christ full pacientlу, and taught vs pacience when he bare vpon hys blessed shoulders the crosse, vpon which he shuld suffre dyshyrtous death. Here maye men learne to be pacient, for certes not only Christen be pacientе for loue of Jesu Christ, and for reward of blessed lyfe that is perdurable, but certes the olde paynems that neuer were christened, comended and vsed the vertue of pacience. A philosopher vpon a tyme that woldе haue beate his disciple for hys great trespace, for wherch he was moued, & brought a rodde to beate the chylde & when this chyld sawe the rodde, he sayd to hys mayster: what thynke ye to do? I woll beate the sayd the mayster for thy correction. Forsoth sayd the chylde, ye ought fyrst correct

your

your selfe that haue lost al your pacience for the offence of a chylde. Forsoth sayd the mayster all weppynge, thou sayest soth: haue thou the rodde my dere chylde, and correcte me for myne impacience. Of pacience cometh obedience, throughe whyche a man is obediente to Christ & to al hem to which he ought be obedient in Christ. And vnderstand wel that obedience is perfyte when that a man doth gladlye and hastely with good herte entierlye, all that he shulde do. Obedience generally is to performe the doctryne of God and of hys seruauntes, to whych hym ought to be obeysaunt in all ryghteousnesse.

¶ De Accidia.

After the synnes of Enuy and yre, nowe woll I speke of the synne of Accidie: for enuy blindeth the herte of a man, and yre troubleth a man & accidie maketh hym heuy, thoughtfull & pensyfe. Enuye and yre maken bytternesse in herte, whych bytternesse is mother of accidie & taketh fro hym the loue of al goodnesse, thē is accidie the angwyshe of trouble of herte. And sayntAugustyne sayeth: It is anoye of goodnesse and anoye of harme. Certes thys is a dampnable synne, for it doth wronge to Jesu Christ, in as moche as it benōmeth the seruyce that men ought do to Christe, as sayeth Salomon: but accidie doth no suche diligence. He doth all thynge wyth anoye & with wrawnesse, slacknesse, and excusation: wyth ydelnesse and vnlust.

For whych the boke sayeth: Accursed be he that doth the seruice of god negligently. Thē is accidie enemye to euery estate of man. For certes thestate of man is in thre maners.

Eyther it is in the estate of Innocency, as was the estate of Adam before that he fyll in to synne, in whych estate he was hold to worke, as in prayesynge and laudynge God. And ther estate is ỳ estate of synfull mē: in which estate men bene holden to laboure in prayenge to God for amendement of her synnes, and that he woll graunte hem to ryse out of her synnes.

Another estate is the state of grace, in whiche state he is holden to workes of penitence: and certes to all these thynges is accidie contrary, for he loueth no busynesse at all. Nowe certes, thys foule synne accidie is also a full great enemye to the lyfelode of the body, for it ne hath no purueyaunce ayenst tēporel necessite, for it forsweleth, forslogeth, & destroyeth al goodes tēporel by recheleesnesse. The iiii. thynge is, that accidie is lyke hem ỳ bene in the payne of hel, bycause of her slouth and heuynesse: for they that be dampned bene so bounde, that they maye neyther well do ne thynke. Of accidie cometh fyrst that a man is anoyed and encombred to do any goodnesse, & maketh ỳ God hath abhominacion of such accidie, as sayeth sayntJohn. Nowe cometh slouth that wol nat suffre no hardnesse ne penaunce: for sothly slouth is so tēder and so delycate, as sayeth Salomon, that he woll suffre no hardnesse ne penaunce, and therfore he marreth all that he doth. Ayenst thys rotten synne of accidie & slouth, shulde men exercise hem selfe & vse hem to do good workes: and manly and vertuously catch corage to do, thynkynge that our Lorde Jesu Christe quyteth euery good dede, be it neuer so lyte. Vsage of labour is a great thyng. For it maketh as sayeth sayntBernard, ỳ labourer to haue stronge armes and harde senewes: & slouth maketh heuye, feble, and tender. Then cometh drede to begynne to worke any good workes. For certes he that enclyneth to synne, hym thynketh it is so great an empryse for to vndertake the workes of goodnesse, and casteth in hys herte, that the circumstaunces of goodnesse bene so greuouse and weyghtye for to suffre, that he dare not vndertake to do workes of goodnesse, as sayeth sayntGregorye.

Nowe cometh wanhope, that is dyspayre of the mercye of God, that cometh somtyme of to moch outragious sorow, and somtyme of to moche drede, ymaginynge that he hath do so moch synne, that it wol not auayle hym tho he wolde repent hym and forsake synne: thorough whych dyspayre or drede, he abandoneth al hys herte to euery maner synne, as sayeth sayntAugustyne. Whych dampnable synne, yf it continue vnto hys ende, it is called synnynge in the holy goost.

Thys horrible synne is so perylous, that he that is dyspayred there nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to do, as shewed well by Judas. Certes aboue al synnes then is thys synne moost dysplesaunt to Christ and moste aduersary. Sothly he that

dyspayreth hym is lyke to the cowarde champion recreaunt, that flyeth wythout nede. Alas alas, nedeles is he recreaunt, and nedelesse dyspayreth. Certes the mercy of God is euer redy to the penitent person, & is aboue al hys werkes. Alas can not a mā bethynke hym on the gospel of saint Luke. xv. where as Christ sayeth, that as well shall there be ioye in heuen vpon a synfull man that doth penitence, as vpon foure score & nyneteene ryghtful mē that nede no penitence. Loke ferther in the same gospell the ioye and ꝑ feest of the good man that had loste hys sonne, whē hys sonne wyth repentaunce was retourned to hys father. Can they not remembre hem also, that (as sayeth saynt Luke) capi. xxiii. Howe that the theefe that was hāged beside Jesu Christ sayd: Lorde remembre me, when thou commest in to thy reygne. Forsoth sayd Christ, I saye to the: To daye shalte thou be with me in paradyse. Certes, there is none so horrible synne of man, that ne maye in hys lyfe be dystroyed by penitence, thorough vertue of passyon and of the death of Christe. Alas what nede men then to be dyspayred, syth that hys mercy is so ready and large? Aske and haue. Then commeth somnolence, that is slugge slombrynge, whyche maketh a man heuy and dull in body and in soule, & this synne cometh of slouth: And certes the tyme that by waye of reason man shulde not slepe, is by ꝑ morowe, but yf there were cause reasonable. For sothely the morowe tyde is most conuenable a man to saye hys prayers, & for to thāke God, and to honoure God, & to yeue almesse to the poore, that cometh fyrst in the name of Jesu Christ. Lo, what sayth Salomō who so woll by the morowe awake to seke me, he shall fynde me. Then cometh negligence or retchelessnesse, that recketh of nothynge. And though that ignoraunce be mother of al harmes, certes negligence is the norryce. Negligence ne dothe no force when he shall do a thynge, whether he do it well or euell. The remedye of these two synnes is, as sayeth the wyse man: That he that dredeth God spareth not to do that he ought to do, and he that loueth god he woll do dylygēce to please god by hys werkes, and abādone hym selfe wyth al hys myght wel for to do. Thē cometh ydelnesse, that is the pate of all harmes. An ydell man is lyke to a place that hath no walles, ꝑ dyuell maye entre on euerye syde, or shote at hym that is dyscouert, by temptation on euery syde. Thys ydelnesse is the theefruke of all wycked and vylayne thoughtes, and of al ordure. Certes the heauen is yeue to hem that wyll labboure, and not to ydell folke. Also Dauid sayeth, that they ne be not in the labboure of men, ne they shall not be whypped wyth men. Certes them semeth it they shall be tormented wyth the dyuels in hell, but yf they do penaunce.

Then cometh the synne that mē cal Tarditas, as when a man is so lattered, or tarienge or he woll tourne to god: and certes that is a great folye. He is lyke hym that falleth in the dyche, and woll not aryse. And thys vyce cometh of false hope, that he thynketh he shall lyue longe, but that hope fayleth full ofte.

Then cometh lachesse, that is he that whē he begynneth any good worke, anone he woll leaue and flyte it, as done they that haue any persone to gouerne, and ne take of hym no more hede, anone as they fynde any contrary or any anoye. These ben the newe shepherdes that let theyr shepe wyttyngly go renne to ꝑ wolfe that is in the bretes, or do not force of her owne gouernaunce. Of thys cometh pouerte and destruction bothe of spirituall and temporell thynges. Then cometh a maner coldnesse that freseth the herte of man. Then cometh vndeuotion, through whyche a man is so blent, and as sayeth saynte Bernarde, hath suche langour in hys soule, that he may nether rede ne synge in holy church, ne here ne thynke of no deuotion, ne trauayle wyth hys handes in no good worke, that it nys to hym delyuery and al apalled. Then waxeth he slowe and slombry and sone wol be wroth and sone is enclyned to hate and enuy. Then cometh the synne of worldly sorowe, such as is called Tristitia, that sleeth a man, as sayeth saynt Poule. For certes suche sorow worcketh the death of the soule and body also, for therof cometh that a man is anoyed of hys owne lyfe. wherfore suche sorowe shorteth full ofte the lyfe of man, er that hys tyme is come by waye of kynde.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

Fyrst

Ayenst thys horryble synne of Accidie, and the braunches of the same, ther is a vertue that is called Fortitudo or strēgth, that is an affection, throughe whiche a man dispyseth anoyous thynges: This vertue is so mighty and so rygorous, that it dare withstonde mightily, and wisely kepe hym self fro perylles that ben wycked, and wrastel ayenst thassautes of the dyuel, for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth & maketh it feble, for thys fortitude may endure by longe sufferaunce the trauayles that ben conenable. This vertue hath manye speces, the fyrste is called Magnanimite, that is to say, great corage. For certes there behoueth great corage ayenst accidie, lest that it ne swalowe ỳ soule by the synne of sorowe, or destroye it by wanhope. Certes this vertue maketh folke vnder take harde and greuous thynges by her own wyl wisely and resonably. And for as moch as the deuyll fyghteth ayenst a man more by sutrite and sleyght than by strength, therfore shall a man withstonde hym by wytte, reason, and discretion. Thā are there the vertues of faythe and hope in God and in hys sayntes, to eschue and accomplisshe the good workes, in the whyche he purposeth fermely to contynue. Than cometh sureté or sykernesse, and that is whan a man ne douteth no trauayle in tyme commyng, of the good workes that he hathe begonne. Than cometh Magnyficence, that is to saye, whan a man dothe and parformeth great workes of good wille that he hath begon, and that is thende why that men shuld do good workes. For in the accomplisshyng of good workes, lyeth the great guerdon. Thā is there Constance, that is stedfastnesse of corage, and thys shulde be in hert by stedfast faythe, and in mouthe, in berynge, in chere, and in dede. Also there ben mo spyrytuall remedyes ayenst accidie, in dyuers workes: as in cōsyderatyō of ỳ paynes of hell, the ioyes of heuen, and in trust of the grace of the holy ghoost, that wyll yeue hym myght to perfourme his good entent.

¶ De Auaricia.

After Accidie woll I speke of Auarice, and of couetyse. Of whych syn saynt Poule sayth the rote of al harmes is couetyse, ad Timoth. vi. For sothly whan the hert of man is cōfounded in it selfe and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of god, than seketh he an ydell solace of worldlye thynges. Auarice, after the discryption of saynt Augustyn, is a lycorousnesse in hert to haue erthly thynges. Some other folke saye, that auaryce is for to purchace many erthely thynges, & nothynge to yeue to hem that haue nede.

And vnderstonde that auarice stōdeth nat onely in londe ne catel, but somtyme in scyence and glorye, & in euerye maner of outragious thynges is Auaryce. And couetyse is thys. Couetyse is for to coueit suche thynges that thou hast nat. And auarice is to withholde & kepe suche thynges as thou haste wythout right. Sothly this auarice is a synne that is ful dāpnable, for al holy writ curseth it, & speketh ayenst ỳ vice, for it doth wrong to Jesu christ: for it taketh fro him the loue that men to hym owe, & tourneth it backeward ayenst al reason, and maketh that the auaryctous man hath more hoope in hys catell, than in Jesu Christ, and dothe more obseruaunce in kepyng of hys treasour than he dothe in the seruyce of Jesu Christ. And therfore sayth the saynt Poule ad Ephesios quinto: That an auaryctous man is the thraldome of idolatrye. What dyfference is there betwyxt an ydolaster and an auaryctous man? But that an ydolaster peraventure ne hathe nat but a mawmet or two, & the auaricious man hath many. For certes euery floreyn in hys cofre, is his maumet. And certes the synne of maumetry is the fyrste that God defended, as in the. i. commaundements it beareth wytnesse, in Exodi Capitu. xx. Thou shalte haue no false goddes before me, ne thou shalte make to the no graue thynge. Thus is an auaricious man, that loueth hys treasour before God, an idolaster. And through this cursed synne of Auaryce and Couetyse cometh these harde lordeshyppes, through whyche they ben streyned by tyllages, customes, and carriages more than her duetye or reason is, or elles take they of her bondmen amercyamentes, whyche myght more resonablye be

called extorcions than merrymentes. Of whiche amerciamentes or raunsonynge of bondmen, some lordes stewardes say that it is rightful, for as moche as a churle hath no temporel thynge, that it ne is his lordes, as they saye. But certes these lordshyppes do wrong, that bereue theyr bondmen thynges that they neuer yaue hem. Augustinus de Ciuitate dei. Libro iv. Sothe is, that the condicio of thraldom, and the fyrst cause of thraldome was for synne.

Thus may ye se, that thoffence deserued thraldome, but nat nature. Wherfore these lordes ne shulde not moche glorifye hem in her lordeshyps, sythe that they by natural condycion ben not lordes ouer thralles, but for that thraldome came fyrste by the deserte of synne. And more ouer there as the law sayth, that temporel goodes of bonde folke ben the goodes of her lorde: ye, that is for to vnderstonde, the goodes of the Emperour, to defende hem in her ryght, but not to robbe hem ne reue hem. Therfore saythe Seneca: thy prudence shulde lyue benygnly with ỳ thralles. Those that thou calleſt thy thralles, ben goddes people: and for humble people ben Christes frendes, they ben contubernyall vnto the lordes. Thynke also that of suche sede as churles spryngе, of suche sede spryng lordes: as wel may the churle be saued as the lorde. The same dethe that taketh the churle, suche dethe taketh the lorde. Wherfore I rede do right so with the churle as thou woldeſt that thy lorde dyd wyth the yf thou were in hys plyght. Euery synful man is a churle to syn: I rede the lorde certes, that thou werke in suche wyse with thy churles, that they rather loue the than drede the. I wote wel that there is degree aboue degree, as reson is, and skyll is that men do her deuoyre there as it is due: But certes extorcions and dispyte of your vnderlynges is dampnable. And ferthermore vnderstonde wel, that these conquerours or tyrauntes make ful ofte thralles of hem that ben borne of as royal bloode as ben they that hem conquere. This name of thraldom was neuer erst knowe, tyl that Noe sayd that his sonne Canam shulde be thral to his brethern for hys synne. What saye we than of hē that pyl and do extorcions to holy church: Certes the swerde that men yeue fyrste to a knyght, whan he is newe dubbed, sygnyfyeth that he shulde defende holy churche, and not robbe and pyl it, and who so doth he is traytour to Chryst. And as sayth sayne Austyn, they ben the dyuels woulues that strangle the shepe of Jesu christ, and done worse than woulues for sothely whan the woulfe hathe full hys wombe, he stynteth to strangle shepe: But sothlye the pyllours and dystroyers of holy church goodes ne do not so, for they ne stynte neuer to pyll. Nowe as I haue sayde, sythe so is that synne was fyrste cause of thraldom than is it thus, that at the tyme that all thys world was in synne, thā was al this worlde in thraldom and in subiection, but certes syth the tyme of grace came, god ordayned ỳ some folke shulde be more hye in estate and in degre, and some folke more lowe, and that eche shulde be serued in hys astate. And therfore in some coūtreys there they be thralles, whō they haue turned hem to ỳ faythe, they make her thralles free out of thraldome, and therfore certes the lorde oweth to hys man that the man oweth to the lorde. The pope calleth hym selfe seruaunte of the seruauntes of God, but for as the estate of holy churche ne might not haue ben, ne the comen profyte myght not haue be kept, ne peace ne reste in erthe, but yf god had ordayned that some mā had hier degree and some men lower. Therfore was soueraynte ordayned to kepe, maynteyne, and defende her vnderlynges and her subiectes in reason, as ferforth as it lyeth in her power, and not to distroye ne confounde hem. Wherfore I say, that those lordes that ben lyke wolues that deuour the possessyons or the catel of poore folkes wrongfully, without mercy or mesure, they shal receyue be the same mesure ỳ they haue mesured to poore folke, the mesure of Jesu Christ but it be amended. Nowe cometh disceyte betwixt marchaunt and marchaunt. And thou shalt vnderstonde that marchaundyse is in two maners, that one is bodily, and that other is goostly: that one is honest and leful and that other is dishonest and vnleful.

The bodily marchaundyse that is lefull & honest is thys: that there as god hath ordayned that a reygne or a countreye is suffysaūt to hym selfe, than it is honeste and lefull that of haboundaunce of hys countrey, men helpe an other countrey that is nedy: And therfore there muste be merchaūtes to bring fro

fro one countrey to that other her marchaun dyse.

That other marchaundyse that mē haun- teth with fraude, and trecherye, and disceyte, with lealynges and false othes, is right cur- sed and dampnable. Espirituel marchaun- dyse is properly Symonye, that is ententife desyre to bye any thynge espyrituel, that is a thynge whyche apertayneth to the sayntua- rye of God, and to cure of the soule. This de- syre yf so be that a man do hys dilygence to perfourme it, al be it that hys desyre ne take non effecte, yet it is to him a deedlye synne, & yf he be ordred, he is irreguler. Certes sy- monye is called of Symon Magus, that wolde haue bought for temporell catell the yefte that God had yeue by the holy goost to saynt Peter and to the Apostels: And ther- fore understonde that he that selleth and he that byethe thynges espyrituels, ben called Symonyakes, be it by catell, be it by procu- ring or by flesshly prayer of his frendes, flesh- ly frendes or espyrituell frendes, flesshly in two maners, as by kynred or other frendes: Sothlye yf they praye for hym that is not worthy and able, it is symonye yf he take the benefice, and yf he be worthy and able there is none. That other maner is whan man or woman prayeth for folke to auaunce hem on ly for wycked flesshly affection, whyche they haue vnto the persons, and that is foule sy- monye. But certes in seruyce, for which men yeuen thinges espyrituel vnto her seruaūtes it must be vnderstonde that the seruice muste be honest, or els not, and also that it be with- out bargeynyng, and that the person be able. For as sayth saynt Damasen: Al the synnes of the worlde at regarde of this synne, are as a thyng of naught, for it is the greatest synne that may be after the synne of Lucifer and of Antichrist: For by this synne God forleseth the churche and the soule whyche he bought with hys precious bloode, by hem that yeue churches to hem that bē not worthy, for they put in theues hondes that steale the soules of Jesu Christ, and distroy hys patrimony. By suche vnworthy preestes and curates haue leude men lesse reuerence of the sacramentes of holy churche, and such peuers of churches put the chyldren of Christ out, and put in the churche the dyuels owne sonnes: they sel the soules that lambes shulde kepe to the wolfe which strangleth hem, and therfore shal they neuer haue parte of the pasture of lambes, that is the blysse of heuen. Nowe cometh ha- sardrie with hys apertenaunces, as tables and rafles, of whyche cometh disceyte, false othes, chydynges, and al raynesse, blasphe- mynges, and renyenges of God, and hate of hys neyghbours, waste of goodes, myspen- dynge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughter. Certes hasardours ne mowe not be without great synne. Of auarice cometh also lesynges theft, false wytnesse, and false othes: and ye shall vnderstonde that these be great synnes, and expresse ayenst the commaundementes of God, as I haue sayd. False wytnesse is in worde, and also in dede: In worde as for to byreue thy neyghboures good name by thy false wytnesse, or byreue hym his catel or his herytage, by thy false wytnessyng, whā thou for yre or for mede, or for enuye, beareſt false wytnesse, or accuseſt him, or excuseſt thy selfe falsly. Ware ye questmongers and notaries: Certes for false wytnessynge was Susan in ful great sorowe & payn, and manye another mo. The syn of theefte is also expresse ayenst goddes hest, & in two maners, corporell and spirituel, the temporel theft is: As for to take thy neyghbours catel ayenst his wyl, be it by force or by sleight, be it by mette or by mesure by stealynge also of false endytementes vpō hym and in borowyng of thy neyghbours ca tell, in entent neuer to paye it ayen, and sem- blable thynges. Espyrituel theefte is sacry- lege, that is to say, hurtyng of holye thynges sacred to Christ in two maners, by reason of the holy place, as churches or churche yerdes For which euery dillaynous synne that men don in suche places maye be called sacrylege, or euerye byolence in the semblable places. Also that they withdrawe falsely the rightes that longe to holye churche and pleasynge. And generally sacrilege is to reue holy thing fro holye place, or vnholye thynge out of ho- lye place, or holy thynge out of vnholy place.

¶ Releuatio contra pecca- tum Auaricie.

Nowe

NOwe shal ye vnderstonde, that releuynge of auarice is myseri-cordе and pyte largely taken. And men might aske why that myserycordе and pyte are releuyng of auarice: Certes the auaricious man sheweth no pyte ne myserycordе to the nedeful man. For he deyeth hym in the keppynge of hys treasure, and nat in the releuynge ne releuynge of his euyn christen. And therfore sythe I trete of myserycordе. Than is myserycordе (as sayethe the Philosopher) A vertue, by whyche the corage of man is stered, by ꝑ mysease of hym that is myseased. Upon whyche myserycordе folowyth pyte, in performyng and fulfilling of charitable workes of mercy, helpeth and comforteth him that is myseased. And certes these thynges moue and stere a man to myserycordе of Jesu christ that he yaue hym selfe for our offence, & suffred dethe for myserycordе, and forgaue vs our original synnes, and therby released vs fro the paynes of hel, & mynished the paynes by penitens, and yeueth grace wel to do, and at laste the blysse of heuen. The speces of myserycordе ben for to lene, and also for to yeue: for to forgeue and release, and for to haue pyte in herte and compassyó, of the mischefe of his euen christen, and also to chastyse there as nede is. Another maner of remedy ayenst Auarice, is resonable largesse: but sothlye here behoueth the consyderacyon of the grace of Jesu Christ, and of the temporell goodes, and also of the goodes perdurable that Jesu Christ yafe to vs, and to haue remembraunce of the dethe whyche he shal receyue, he knoweth not whan where, ne howe: and also that he shall forgo all that he hath, saue onely that whyche he hath expended in good werkes.

But for as moche as some folke been vnmesurable, menne ought for to auoyde and eschue folysche largesse, the whyche some people cal waste.

Certes he that is foole large, yeueth not hys catel, but he leseth hys catel.

Sothlye what thynge that he yeueth for beynglorye, as to mynstrels and to folke to beare his renome in the worlde, he hath synne therof & none almesse: Certes he leseth foule hys good that he ne seketh wyth the vefte of hys good nothyng but synne. He is lyke to an horse that seketh rather to drynke drouy & troubled water than for to drynke water of the clere welle. To hem appercteyné the foure cursynges, that Christ shal yeue at the day of dome, to hem that shal be dampned.

¶ Sequitur de Gula.

AFter Auarice cometh Glotony, whyche is expresse ayenst the commaundement of god. Glotony is vnmesurable appetyte to eete or to drynke, or els to do ynough to the vnmesurable appetyte and disordeyned coueytise to eate or to drynke. This synne corrupteth all thys worlde, as is well shewed in the synne of Adam and of Eue. Loke also what sayethe saynt Poule of glotonye. Many (sayethe he) gone, of whyche I haue often sayde to you, and nowe I say it weepynge, that ben the enmyes of the crosse of Christ, of whyche the ende is dethe, and of whyche her woombe is her god and her glorye, in confusyon of hem that so deuour erthly thynges. He that is bonde to this synne of glotony, he ne may no synne withstonde, he must be in seruage of al vices, for it is the develes hourde, there he hydeth and resteth hym. This synne hath many speces. The fyrste is dronkenesse that is the horyble sepulture of mans reson: and therfore whan man is dronke he hath loste his reson: And thys is deedly synne. But sothly whan that a man is not wonte to stronge drynke, and paraventure ne knoweth not ꝑ strength of the drynke, or hath febblesse in hys heed, or harde trauayled, through whych he drinketh the more, al be he sodainly caught wt drynke, it is no deedly synne but venyal. The seconde spece of glotonye is, that the spyrite of a man wereth al troubled for dronkenesse by-reueth hym the discretion of his wytte.

The thyrde maner spece of glotonye is whan a man deuoureth his meate, and hath not ryghtful maner of eetyng. The fourth is whan through the great abundaunce of hys meete, the humours in hys body ben distempred. The fyfth is foryetfulnesse by to moche drynkyng, for whych somtyme a man forgetteth er the morwyng what he dyd on the euenyng before.

In other

In other maner ben dystynct the speces of glotonye after saynt Gregoye. The fyrste is for to eate before tyme to eate. The seconde is whā a man gyueth hym to delycate meate or drynke. The thyrde is whan men take to moche ouer measure. The fourthe is curyosyte, wyth great entent to make and apparayle hys meate. The fyfthe is for to eate to gredely.

These ben the fyue fyngers of the dyuels honde, by whyche he drawyth folke to synne.

¶ The remedy ayenst Glotony.

Ayenst glotony the remedy is abstynence as sayth Galyene: but that I holde nat meritorious, yf he do it for the beate of hys body. Saynte Augustyne wolle that abstynence be done for vertue, and wyth patience. Abstinence, sayth he, is lytel worth but yf a man haue good wyl therto, and but if he be enforced by patience and charyte, and that men do it for goddes sake, and in hope to haue the blysse of heuen.

The felowes of abstynence be attemperaunce, that holdeth the meane in all thynges. Also shame that eschewyth all dishonestye. Suffysaunce that seketh no ryche meates ne drynkes, ne dothe nat force of outrageous apparelyng of meate. Measure also, that restreyneth by reason, the vnmesurable appetyte of eatyng. Sobernesse also, that restrayneth the outrage of drynke. Sparynge also, that restrayneth ꝑ delycate ease to sytte longe at meate, wherfore some folke stonden of her owne wyl whan they eete, bycause they wol eate at lasse leyser.

¶ De Luxuria.

After Glotonye cometh Lechetye, for these two synnes been so nye cosyns, that oftyme they wol nat depart. God wote this synne is ful displesaunt to god, for he sayde hym selfe: do no lechetye. And therfore he putteth great paynes ayenst thys synne.

For in the olde lawe, yf a woman thrall were take in thys synne, she shulde be beate wyth staues to dethe. And yf she were a gentylwoman she shulde be slayne wyth stones. And yf she were a bysshops doughter, she shulde be brent by goddes commaundement.

Moreouer by the synne of lechetye, God drowned al the world and after that he brent fyue cytees with thunder and lightnyng, and sanke hem in to hel.

Nowe lette vs speke than of the sayd stynking synne of lechery, that men cal auowtrye of wedded folke, that is to saye, yf that one of hem be wedded or els bothe.

Saynt Johan sayth, that auoutrers shalbe in hell in a stacke brennynge of fyre and of brumstone for the stenche of her ordure: Certes the brekynge of this sacrament is an horryble thyng: It was made of God hym selfe in paradyse, and confermed by Jesu Christ, as wytnesseth saynt Mathewe in the gospel: A man shall leaue father and mother & take hym to hys wyfe, and they shalbe two in one flesh.

Thys sacrament betokeneth the knyttyng togyther of Chryste and holye churche. And not onely that god forbade auoutrye in dede, but also he commaunded that thou shuldest not coueyte thy neyghbours wyfe. In thys heste sayth saynt Augustyne is forboden all maner couetyse to do lechetye. Lo, what sayth saynt Mathewe in the gospell, that who so seeth a woman to couetyse of hys lust he hath done lechetye wyth her in his herte. Here may ye se that not only the dede of thys synne is forboden, but also the delyte to that synne. Thys cursed synne anoyeth greuously hem that it haunte: and fyrst to her soule, for he obligethe it to synne and to payne of dethe, whyche is perdurable. Unto the body anoyeth it greuously also, for it dryeth hym and wasteth, and shenteth hym, and of hys bloode he maketh sacrifyce to the fende of hel: It wasteth hys catell and his substaunce. And certes yf it be a foule thynge a man to waste hys catell on women: yet it is a fouler thynge whan that for suche ordure women dispende vpon men her catell and her substaunce. This synne as sayth the Prophete, taketh from man and woman her good fame and her honour, and it is full delectable and pleasaunt to the dyuell. For therby wynneth he the more parte of thys wretched worlde. And ryght as a marchaut delyteth him most in that

in that chastate whiche he hath moste auaun
tage and profyte of, ryght so deiyteth ꝑ fende
in this ordure.

This is that other honde of the dyuel, with
fyue fyngers, to catche the people to hys vila
nye. The fyrste is the folysshe lokynge of the
folysshe woman and of the folysshe man, that
sleeth ryght as the Basilycock or cokatrice
sleeth folke by venym of hys syght: for the co
uetyse of the eyen followeth the couetyse of ꝑ
herte. The seconde fyngre is the vilaynous
touchynge in wycked maner. And therfore
sayth Salomon: that who so toucheth and
handleth a woman, he fareth as that man
that handleth the scorpyon, whiche styngeth
a sodaynly sleeth thorough his enuenemyng,
or as who so that toucheth warme pytche
blemysheth hys fyngers. The thyrde is foule
wordes, whych fareth lyke fyre, which right
anon bremmeth the herte. The fourth fyngre
is the kyssynge: And truely he were a great
foole that wolde kysse the mouthe of a brem
nyng ouen or of a fourneys. And more fooles
ben they that kysse in vilanye, for that mouth
is the mouthe of hell, and namely these olde
dotardes holours, which woll kysse and flat
ter, and beseye hem selfe thoughe they maye
naught do. Certes they ben lyke to houndes:
for an houndе whan he cometh nigh to the
roote, or by other benches, though so be that
he maye not pysse, yet woll he heue vp hys
legge and make a countenaunce to pysse. And
for that manye man weneth that he maye
not synne for no lyxtousnesse that he dothe
with hys wyfe. Truely that opprynyon is
false: God wote a man maye slee hym selfe
with hys owne knyfe, and make hym selfe
dronke of his owne tonne. Certes be it wife,
be it chylde or anye worldly thynge, that he
loueth before God, it is hys maumet, and be
is an ydolastre. A man shulde loue his wyfe
by discrecyon, pacyently and attemperatlye,
and than is she as thoughe it were his suster.
The fyfthe fyngre of the dyuels honde is the
synnynge dede of lecherye. Truely the fyue
fyngers of glotonye the dyuell putteth in to
the wombe of a man: And with his fyue fyn
gers of lecherye he grypeth hym by ꝑ reynes
for to throwe hym in to the furneys of helle,
there as they shal haue the fyre and the wor
mes that euer shal laste, and wepynge and
waylynge, and sharpe hungre and thurste,
grymmesse of dyuels, whyche shal al to tere
hem withouten ende. Of lecherye as I sayd
sourdeth and springeth dyuers speces: As
fornycacyon, that is bytwene man and wo
man which be not maryed and is deedly syn,
and ayenst nature: Al that is enemye and de
struction to nature is ayenst nature. Perfay
the reason of a man telleth hym wel also that
it is deedly synne, for as moche as god for
bade lecherye. And saynte Poule yeueth hem
the reygne that nus de we to no wyght but to
hem that done deedly synne. An other synne
of lecherye is to bereue a maydes mayden
hede, for he that so dothe, certes he casteth a
mayden out of the hyest degre that is in the
presente lyfe, and bereueth her that precious
frute that the bokе calleth the hundred frutes
(I ne can saye it none other wyse in Englisshe,
but in Latyn it highte Centesimus fructus.)
Certes he that so dothe is cause of many da
mages and vilanyes, mo than anye man can
reken: ryght as he is cause of many damages
sometyme that beestes do in the felde, that
breke the hedge or the closure through whi
he destroyeth that maye not be restored: for
certes no more may mayden hede be restored
than an arm that is smytte fro the body may
retourne ayen and were: Shе maye haue
mercy, thus wote I wel, yf that she haue wil
to do penitence, but neuer shall it be that she
nas corrupte. And all be it so ꝑ I haue spoke
somwhat of auoutry, also it is good to shewe
the perylles that longe to auoutrye, for to es
chewe we that foule synne. Auoutrye in latyn is
for to saye, approchynge of an other mannes
bedde, through whyche those that sometyme
were one flesh, abandon her bodyes to other
persones. Of thys synne as sayth the wyse
man folowe many harmes: First breakynge
of fayth, and certes in fayth is the keye of
christendome: and whan that fayth is broke
and lost, forthy christendom stont perelous
without frute. Thys synne is also theft, for
theefte generally is to reue a wight his thyng
ayenst hys wyll. Certes thys is the foulest
theefte that may be, whan that a woman ste
leth her body fro her husbonde and yeueth it
to her lolour to deforie her, and stealeth her
soule fro Christ, and yeueth it to the dyuell:
This is a fouler theefte than for to breake a
church and steale away the chalyce, for theef
auoutrers breke the temple of god spyrytuel
ly, and

lye and steale the vessell of grace, that is the body and the soule: for whyche Christ shall distroye hem, as sayth sayncte Paule. Soothly of thys theefte doubted greatlye Joseph, whan that hys Lordes wyfe prayed hym of vylanye, whan he sayde: Lo my Ladye howe my Lorde hath take to me vnder my warde, all that he hathe in thys worlde, ne nothynge of hys thynges is out of my power, but only ye that be his wyfe: and howe shulde I than do thys wyckednesse and synne horrible ayenst God, and ayenst my lorde God it forbede. Alas, all to lytell is suche trouthe nowe founde. The thyrde harme is the frithe, throughe whyche they breake the commaundemente of God, and defoyle the ryght of matrymonye, that is Christe. For certes in so muche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it greater synne for to breake it: For God made mariage in Paradyse in the estate of innocencye, to multiply mankynde in the service of God, and therfore is the breakynge therof the more greuous, of whyche breking come false heyres otte time, that wrongfully occupye folkes heritages, and therfore wol Christ put hem out of the reygne of heuen, that is heritage to good folke. Of thys breakyng cometh also ott time that folke vnware wedde or synne wyth her owne kynred: and namely these harlottes that haunte bordels of these foule women, that maye be lykened to a comune gonge, where as men pourge her ordure. what say we also of putours, that lyue by the horrible synne of putrye, and constreyne women to yeue to hem a certeyne rente of her bodyly putery, yee some of hys owne wyfe or hys chylde, as done these baudes: Certes these bene cursed synnes. Understande also that auoutrie is lette gladlye in the ten commaundementes betwene theefte and man slaughter, for it is the greatest theft ỳ may be, for it is theefte of bodye and of soule, and it is like to homicide for it kercth a two and breketh a two hem that fyrst were made of one flesche. And therfore by the olde lawe of God they shulde be slayne, but nathelesse by ỳ law of Jesu Christ that is lawe of pytye, whan he sayde to the woman that was fonde in auoutrye, and shulde haue be slayne wyth stones after the wyll of the Jewes, as was her lawe: So sayde Jesu Christe, and haue no more wyll to do synne. Soothly the vengeaunce of auoutrye is awarded to the paynes of hell, but if so be that it be distourbed by penitence. Yet bene there mo speces of thys cursed synne, as whan that one of hem is relygyouse or elles bothe, or of folke that bene entred in to ordre, as subdeaken, deaken, or Preeste, or hospitaliers. And euer the hyer that he is in ordre, the greater is the synne. The thynges that greatlye agredge her synne is the breaking of her auow of chastitie whā they receyued the order. And more ouer sothe is that holye order is cheefe of all the treasorye of God and hys especial signe and marke of chastite, to shew that they ben ioyned to chastitie, whych is the moost precious life that is: and these ordred folke bene specially titled to God and of the special meyne of God, for whyche whan they done deedly synne they bene traytoures of God and of hys people, for they lyue of the people. Preestes ben angels as by dignetie of her misterye, but forsoth sayne Paule sayth ỳ Sathanas transfourmeth hym in an angell of lyght. Soothly the preest that haunteth deedly synne, he maye be lykened to the angell of derkenesse, transfourmed in the aungell of lyght, he semeth angel of lyght, but forsoth he is angel of derkenesse. Suche preestes be the sonnes of Helye, as it wryth in the boke of kynges, that they were the sonnes of Belial, that is the deuell. Belial is to saye wythout iuge and so fare they, hem thynketh they be free and haue no iuge, no more than hathe a free bulle that taketh whyche cowe that hym lyketh in the towne. So fare they by wemen, for ryght as one free bulle is ynoughe for al a towne, ryghte so is a wycked preeste corruption ynoughe for all a paryshe, or for all a countre: These preestes, as sayth the boke ne can not ministre the mistery of prestehode to the people, ne they knowe not God, they ne helde hem not apayed, as sayth the boke of sodeyne flesche that was to hem offered, but they toke by force the flesshe that was raw. Certes, so that these shrewes ne helde hem not apayed of rosted and sodde flesche, with which the people fedde hem in greate reuerence, but they wol haue rawe flesche of folkes wyues and her doughters, certes these women ỳ cõsente to her harlotry done

great wronge to Christ and to holy church, al halowes, and al soules, for they byreue al these hem that shulde worshyp Christe, and holy churche, and praye for christen soules, and therfore haue such preestes and her lemmans also that consente to her lecherye, the cursing of al the court christen, til they come to amendemente. The thyrde spece of auoutrye is somtyme betwixt a mā & his wyfe, & that is whan they take no regarde in her assemblynge, but only to her flesshly delyte, as sayeth saynt Jerome, & ne reken of nothing but that they ben assembled because they ben maryed, al is good ynough, as they thinke: but in suche folke hath the dyuell power, as sayde the angell Raphaell to Tobye, for in her assemblying they put Jesu Christ out of her herte, and gyue her selfe to all ordure.

The fourthe spece is the assemble of hem that bene of affinite, or els of hem, wyth which her fathers or her kynred haue dealed in the synne of lecherye: Thys synne maketh hem lyke to houndes, that take no kepe to kynred And certes parentele is in two maners, eyther ghostly or flesshly: ghostly as for to deale wyth hys godsyb, for ryght so as he that engendreth a chyld is hys flesshly father: right so is hys God father hys father espirituell: for whyche a woman maye in no lesse synne assemble wyth her godsyb, than wyth her owne flesshly brother. The fifth spece is that abhominable synne, of whyche abhominable syn no man vnneth ought spekē ne write nathelesse it is openly rehersed in holy writ.

Thys cursed synne done men and women in diuers entente and in diuers maner: But though that holy writ speke of horrible syn, certes holy writte maye not be defoyled, no more thā the sūne that shyneth on the dongehyll. Another synne apertayneth to lecherye that cometh sleping, & this syn cometh often to hem that be maydens, & also to hem that be corrupt, & this syn mē cal Polucion, that commeth of thre maners: Somtime of languyshyng of body, for the humours bene to ranke & aboundaunt in the body of man, somtime of infirmite, for feblenesse of the vertue retentife, as phisike maketh mencion: Somtime for surfet of meate & drinke, & somtime of vylanous thoughtes that ben enclosed in mannes mynd whā he goeth to slepe which maye not be without synne, for whych men muste kepe hem wyselye, or elles maye men synne full greuously.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum luxurie.

NOwe cometh the remedy ayenst lecherye, & ỳ is generally chastite and continence that restrayne all disordinate mouynges & come of slesshely talentes. And euer the greater merite shal be haue that moost restreyneth the wycked chaufynges of the ordoure of thys sin, & thys is in two maners: That is to say chastite in mariage & chastite in widowhed Now shalt ỳ vnderstande ỳ matrimony is leful assēblying of man & woman that receiuen by vertue of thys sacramente, the bende throughe whyche they maye not be departed in all her lyfe, that is to saye, while that they lyue both. Thys as sayeth the boke is a full greate sacramente, God made it as I haue sayd in paradyse, and wolde hym self be bone in mariage: and for to halowe mariage he was at a weddynge, where as he turned water in to wyne, whyche was the fyrste miracle that he wrought in earthe before hys disciples. Trew effecte of mariage cleuseth fornication and replenysheth holye churche of good lynage, for that is the ende of mariage, and chaungeth deedly synne in to venyal sinne, betwene hem that ben wedded, & maketh the bertes as one of hem that bene wedded, as well as the bodyes.

Verry mariage was established by god er that syn began, whan naturall law was in his ryght poynt in Paradise. And it was ordayned that o man shulde haue but a woman, and o womā but o man, as sayth saynt Augustyne, by many reasons.

Fyrste for mariage is figured betwixt Christ and holy churche.

Another is for a man is head of a womā alway by ordinaunce it shulde be so. For yf a womā had mo men thā one, than shulde she haue mo heedes thā one, and that were a ryght horrible synne before God, and also a woman myght not please so manye folke at ones: and also there shulde neuer be rest ne quiete amonge hem, for eche of hem wolde

ake her owne ryght. And furthermore, no man shulde know hys owne engendrure, ne who shulde haue hys heritage, and the woman shulde be the lesse beloued.

Now cometh how that a man shulde dele hym wyth hys wyfe, & namely in two thynges: that is to saye, in sufferaunce and contynence, as shewed Christ whan he fyrste made woma. For he ne made her of ꝑ heade of Adam, for she shulde not clayme to greate lordshyp, for there as the woman hath the maystrye, she maketh to muche variaunce, there nede no mo ensamples of thys, the experience al daye, ought ynough suffice.

Also certes, God ne made not woman of the fote of Adam, for she shuld not beholde to lowe, for she can not pacientlȳ suffre: but God made woman of the rybbe of Adam, for woman shulde be felowe vnto man.

Man shulde beare hym to hys wyfe in fayth, in trouth, and in loue, as sayth sayut Paule that a man shulde loue hys wyfe, as Christ loueth holye churche, that loued it so well that he dyed for it: so shulde a man for hys wyfe, yf it were nede.

Nowe howe that a woman shulde be subiecte to her husbande: that telleth sayncte Peter, fyrst in obedience. And also as sayth the decree: A woma that is a wyfe, as long as she is a wyfe she hath none auctoritye to swere ne beare witnes without leaue of her husbande ꝑ is her Lorde, alwaye he shulde be so by reason. She shulde also serue hym in al honestye & be attẽpperate of her array.

I woll well that they shulde set her entent to please her husbãdes but not be queintise of her araye. S. Jerom sayeth: wiues ꝑ be apparelled in sylke and precious purple, ne mowe nat clothe hem in Jesu Christe. Sayncte Greg sayeth also: that no wyghte seketh precious aray, but only for vayniglorye to be honoured the more of the people. It is great folye a woman to haue great araye, outwarde, and in her selfe be foule inwarde. A wyfe shulde also be mesurable in lokynge in bearyng, and in laughyng, and discrete in al her wordes and her dedes, and aboue all worldelye thynges she shulde loue her husbande wyth al her herte, and to hym be true of her bodye: So shulde an husbande be to hys wyfe: For sythe that all the body is the husbandes, so shuld her hert be, or els there is betwixte hem two, as in that no perfyte mariage. Than shall men vnderstande that for thre thynges a man and hys wyfe fleshly may assemble. The first is for thentent of engendrure of chyldren to the seruice of god for certes that is the cause finall of matrimony. Another cause is to yelde ech of hem to other ꝑ dettes of her bodyes, for neyther of hem hath power of ther owne bodyes. The thyrde is to eschew lechery and vylanye. The fourthe is forsoth deedlye synne. As to the fyrste is meritorye: the seconde also, for as sayeth the decre, that she hath meryte of chastite that yeldeth to her husbande the dette of her body, yee though it be ayenst her lykynge and the luste of her herte. The thyrde maner is venyall synne, and truelye scarsely may anye of these be wythout venyal synne for the corruption and for the delyte. The fourth maner is for to vnderstand if they assemble only for amorous loue, and for none of the forsayde causes, but for to accomplysshe the vnmesurable delyte, they recke not howe ofte, sothlye it is deedly synne: and ꝑ wyth sorowe some folke woll payne hem more to do them to her appetyte sufficeth.

The seconde maner of chastitye is for to be a clene wydowe and eschew the embrasynges of a man, and desyre the embrasynge of Jesu Christe: These bene those that haue bene wyues, and haue forgote her husbandes, and also women that haue done lecherye, and bene receyued by penitence. And certes yf that a wyfe couldе kepe her all chaste by licence of her husbande, so that she yeue neuer none occasion that he offende, it were to her a greate meryte. Thys maner of woman that obserueth chastitie in clothynge & in countenaunce, abstinent in eatinge & drinkyng, in spekyng and in dede, she is the vessel of the bore of the blessed Maudelayne ꝑ fulfylleth holy church of good ordour. The thyrde maner of chastitie is virginitie, and it behoueth that she be holye in herte, & clene of body, than is she spouse of Jesu Christe, and she is the lyf of aungels: she is the prayse synge of thys worlde, & she is as these martyrs in regaly: she hath in her ꝑ tonge maye not tell ne herte thynke. Virginitie bare our Lorde Jesu Christe, and virgyn was hym selfe.

Another remedy ayenst lechery is spec-

allye to withdrawe suche thynges as yeue occasyon to that delyte: as ease, eatynge, and drinkyng: for certes whan the potte boyleth stronglye, the beste remedy is to withdrawe the fyre. Sleppyng longe in great quiete is also a great nourysher to lecherye.

Another remedy ayenst lechery is that a man or a woman eschewe the company of hem by whyche he douteth to be tempted: for all be it so that the dede is withstande, yet is there great temptacion. Sothly a whyte walle, all thoughe it ne brenne not fullye by stickyng of the candell, yet is the wal blacke of the flame. Ful oft tyme I rede that no man trust in hys owne perfection, but he be stronger than Sampson, or holyer than Daniel or wyser than Salomon.

Nowe after that I haue declared you as I can, the seuyn deedly synnes, and some of her braunches, wyth her remedies: Sothly yf I coulde, I wolde tel you the ten commaundementes, but so hye doctrine I put to diuines. Nathelesse I hope to God they ben touched in this treatise eche of hem.

Sequitur secunda pars penitencie.

NOwe for asmuche as the seconde parte of penitence stont in confession of mouth, as I be gan in the fyrste chap, I saye saynte Austen sayeth:

Synne is euery worde and euery dede and all that men coniecte agaynst the lawe of Jesu Christe, and thys is for to synne in hert, in mouth, and in dede, by the fyue wyttes, which ben syght, hearyng, smellyng, tastyng or sauour, & felyng. Nowe it is good to vnderstande, that that aggredgeth muche euery synne. Thou shalt consider what thou art that dostе the syn, whether thou be male or female, yonge or olde, gentyll or thrall, free or seruaunt, hole or sicke, wedded or single, ordred or vnordred, wyse or fole, clerke or secular, yf the be of thy kynrede bodilye or gostly, or no, yf any of thy kynred haue synned wyth her or no, & many mo thynges. Another circumstaunce is this, whether it be done in fornicacion or in aduoutry or no, or maner of homicyd or no, horrible great synnes or smal, & how long thou hast contynued in synne. The thyrde circumstaunce is the place there thou hast done synne, whether in other mennes houses or in thyne owne, in felde, in church or in churchyarde, in church dedicate or no. For yf the churche be halowed & man or woman spyl his blode, other in that place by way of synne or wicked temptation, the churche is entercluded, & the preest that dyd such a villany, the terme of all hys life he shulde no more synge masse, and if he did, he shulde do deedly synne at euery tyme yt he so longe masse. The fourth circumstaunce is by which mediatours or by which messengers or for enticement. As for consentement to beare company with felowshyp. For many a wretche for to beare compayne, wol go to the deuel of hell: wherfore they that egge or consente to the synne, ben partyners of the synne, & of the temptation of the synner. The fyfth circumstaunce is how many tymes that he hath synned, yf it be in his mynde, & how oft he hath fallen. For he that oft falleth in syn, he despiseth the mercy of God and encreseth his synne, & is vnkynde to Christ, & he wexeth the more feble to withstande syn, & synneth the more lyghtly, & the later ryseth, & is more slow to shryue him, & namely to him yt is his confessour. For whyche that folke wyl they fal ayen to her olde folyes, eyther they leaue their olde confessour, or els they depart her shrift in diuers partes. But sothly suche departed shrifte deserueth no mercy of God for her synnes. The sixte circumstaunce is, why that a man synneth as by temptacion: & if him selfe procure that temptacion, or by the enticinge of other folke, or if he syn with a woman by force or by her assente, or yf the woman mangre her herde haue be a forced or none. This shall he tell, whether it were for couetise or pouertye, or yf it were by her procurement or no, and such other thynges. The seuenth circumstaunce is, in what maner he hathe do hys synne, or howe that he hathe suffred that folke haue do to her. And the same shall the man tell playnly wyth all the circumstaunces, and whether he hathe synned wyth comen bonded woman or none or done hys synne in holye tymes or none, in fastyng time or none, or before hys shrifte or after hys later shryfte, and hath paraunture broke thereby his penaunce enioyned by whose helpe or whose counsayle by sorcery or craft

ne craste, all muste be tolde, & all these thynges after as they be gret or smale, & grudge the conscience of man or womā. And eke the preest that is thy juge, maye the better be avised of his jugement in yevyng of penaūce and that is after thy contrition. For understande wel that after tyme that a man hath defoyled hys baptyme by synne, yf he woll come to saluation there is none other waye but by penaunce, shrifte, and satisfaction, & namely by the two, yf there be a confessoure to whom he may shrive him, and the thyrde yf he have lyfe to performe it. Than shall a man loke and consider, that yf he wol make a trewe & a profitable confession, there must be foure conditions.

Furst it must be in sorowfulnesse of hert as sayth the kynge Ezechiel to God, I wol remembre me al the yeres of my lyfe in bitternesse of my hert. This condition of bytternes hath foure signes: The furst is that confession must be shamefaste, not for to cover ne hide her sin for he hath offended his lord god & defoyled his soule. And herof sayth saynte Augustyn: The herte travayleth for shame of his synne, & for he hath greate shamefastnes he is worthy to have gret mercy of god which was the confession of the Publicaue, that wolde not heave up hys eyen to heven for he had offended god of heven, for which shamfastnesse he had anone ỳ mercy of god. And therof sayeth sayne Augustyn: ỳ suche shameful folke be nert for vevenesse & mercy.

Another signe is humilite in confession, of which sayth sayne Peter: Humbleth you under the myght of god: ỳ hande of God is strong in confession, for therby god forveveth the thy sinnes, for he alone hath the power And this humilite shalbe in hert and in outwarde signes: For right as he hath humiliate to God in his herte, ryght so shulde he humble his bodye outwarde to the preest, ỳ sytteth in goddes stede. For which in no maner, syth that Christe is soverayne, and the Preeste meane and mediatoure betwixte Christe, and the synner is lasse by waye of reason. Than shulde nat the synner sytte as hye as his confessour but knele before him or at his fete, but yf sykenesse cause it: For he sal not take hede who sytteth there, but in whose place he sytteth. A man that hath trespassed to a Lorde & cometh to aske mercye and make hys accorde, and sytteth hym downe by hym, men wolde holde hym outragious and nat worthy so sone for to have remission of hys trespace.

The thyrde signe is, howe thy shrifte shulde be full of teares yf thou maye, and yf thou maye nat wepe wyth thy bodily eyen, than wepe in thyne herte, whyche was the confession of sayute Peter. For after that he had forsake Jesu Christe, he wente out and wepte full bitterly.

The fourth signe is, that thou ne lette nat for shame to shewe thy confession: Such was the confession of Magdaleyn, that ne spared for no shame of hem that were at the feest, to go to oure Lorde Jesu Christe, and beknowe to hym her synnes. The fyfth signe is, that a man or a woman be obeysaunte to receyve the penaunce that hem is enjoyned. For certes Jesu Christe, for the offences of man was obedient to deth. The seconde condition of very confession is, that it be hastely done. For certes, yf a man had a deedly wounde, euer the lenger that he taryeth to heale hym selfe, the more wolde it corrupte and haste hym to hys deathe, and also the wounde wolde be the worse for to heale. And ryghte so fareth the synne, that longe tyme is in a man unshewed. Certes a man ought hastely shewe hys synnes for manye causes, as for drede of deathe, that commeth ofte sodaynly, and no certayne what tyme it shall be, ne in what place, and also the drenchyng of o synne draweth in another: and also the lenger that he taryeth the farther he is fro Christe. And if he abide to hys last day, scarcely may he shrive hym or remembre hym of hys synnes, or repente for the greuous maladye of hys death. And for as muche as he ne hathe in hys lyfe hertened Jesu Christe whan he hath spoken, he shall crye to Jesu Christe at hys last day and scarcely woll he herken hym. And understande that thys condition muste have foure thynges.

Thy shrifte must be prouded before & avysed, for wycked hast doth no profyte, yf a mā shrive hym of hys synnes, be it of pride or envye, and so forthe wyth the speces and circumstaunces of synne. And that he have comprehended in hys mynde the nombre and greatnesse of hys synnes, and howe longe

he hathe lyen in syn. And also that he hathe be contrite for hys synnes, and in stedfaste purpose (by the grace of God) neuer ayen to fal to synne. And also that he drede & countertwayte hym selfe that he flye the occasion of synne, to whych he is enclined. Also thou shalt shryue the of al thy synnes to a man, & not part to o man and part to another, that is to vnderstande, in entent to depart thy confession for shame or drede, for it is but strangelynge of thy soule. For certes Jesu Christe is entierly al good, in hym nys none imperfection, and therfore eyther he forgeueth all perfeitely, or els neuer a deale. I saye nat þ yf thou be assigned to thy penytencer for certayne synne that thou arte bounde to shewe hym all þ remenant of thy synnes, of which thou haste be shryuen of thy curate, but yf it lyke to the of thy humilite, thys is no parte of thy shrift. Ne I say nat there as I spcke of diuision of confession, that yf thou haue licence to shryue the to a discrete & an honeste preeste where the lyketh, & by licence of thy curate, that thou ne mayest well shryue the to him of al thy synnes. Let no synne be vntolde as farre as thou hast remembraunce. And whan thou shalt be shryuen to thy curate, tell hym all thy synnes that thou haste do syth thou wast laste shriuen. Thys is no wycked entent of diuision of shrift.

Also the very shrift asketh certayne condicions. First that thou shriue the by thy free wyl, nat constrayned for shame of folke, sickenesse, ne such other thynges. For it is reason, that he that trespaceth by his free wyll that by his free wyl he confesse his trespace and that none other man tell hys synne but him selfe, ne he shal nat nay ne deny his sin, ne wrath him ayenst the preest for amonyshyng him to leaue hys synne. The seconde condition is, that thy shryfte be laufull, that is to say, that thou shriuest the. And also the preest that heareth thy confession be veryly in fayth of holy churche, and that a man ne be not dispeyred of the mercy of Jesu Christe, as Caym or Judas. And also a man muste accuse him self of his owne trespace & not a nother, but he shall blame & wyte hym selfe and his owne malice of his synne, and none other: But nathelesse if that another man be occasion or entycer of hys syn, or the estate of a person be such by which his synne is agredged, or els þ he may not playnly shryue him but he tel the personne wyth whiche he hath synned, than may he tell, so that his entent ne be not to backbyte the person, but only to declare hys confession. Thou ne shalte not also make no leasynges in thy confessiõ for humilitie, parauenture to say that thou hast commited and done suche synnes as of whyche that thou ne were neuer gylty. For saint Augustyn sayeth, yf that thou because of thyne humilitye makest leasynges of thy selfe, though thou were not in synne before, yet arte thou than in synne through thy leasynge. Thou muste also shewe thy synne by thyne owne proper mouthe, but thou be dombe & not by no letter: For thou that hast done the synne, shalte haue the shame therfore. Thou shalt not the paynt thy cõfession by fayre subtell wordes, to couer the more thy synne: for than begylest thou thy selfe & nat the preest, thou muste tell it playne, be it neuer so foule ne horrible. Thou shalte also shryue the to a preest, that is discrete to counsayle the, and also thou shalte nat shriue the for vayngloye, ne for ypocrisye, ne for no cause but only for the loue and feare of Jesu Christ, and heale of thy soule. Thou shalte not also ren to the preest sodainly to tel him lightly thy synne, as who sayth, to tel a tale or a tale, but auysedly and with good deuotion: And generally shryue the ofte yf thou ofte fal ofte aryse by confession. And though thou shriue the ofter than ones of the synne which thou hast be shriuen of, it is the more meryte. And as sayth saynt Augustyn, thou shalt haue the more lyghtly forgeuenes and grace of God, both of synne and payne. And certes ones a yere at leest, it is laufull to be houseled, for surely ones a yere all thynges renouellen.

Nowe haue I tolde you of very cõfession, that is the seconde parte of penitence.

Explicit secunda pars penitentie: Et sequitur tertia pars.

The thyrde part of penitence is satisfaction, & that stant moste generallye in almesse dedes & bodily payne. Now ben there thre maner of almes. Cõmun of hert, where a mã offreth him self to god.

Another

In other is, to haue pyte of default of his neyghbour. And the thyrde is in gyuyng of good counsayle, goostly and bodily whereas men haue nede, and namely in sustenance of mans fode. And take kepe þ a mā hath nede of these thynges generally, he hath nede of fode of clothyng, & of herberow: he hath nede of charitable counsayle, visityng in prison in sickenesse, and sepulture of his body. And if thou mayst nat visite the nedeful in thy persone, visite them with thy messages & pistles. These been generally the almesse & workes of charite, of hem that haue temporal riches or discretion in counsaylyng. Of these workes shalte thou here at the daye of dome.

These almesses shalt thou do of thyn owne proper thynges, & hastely & priuely if thou mayst: But natheles, if thou mayst nat do it priuely, thou shalte nat forbeare to do almesse though mē se it, so that it be nat do for thanke of the worlde but only for thanke of Jesu christ. For as witnesseth sayntt Mathu Cap v. Ye ete maye nat be hydde that is set on a mountayne ne men lyght nat a lantern to putte it vnder a bussh el but sette it vpon a candelsticke to yeue light to men in þ house. Right so shul your lyght, light before men that they maye se your good workes, & glorify our father that is in heuen.

Now as to speake of bodely payne it stont in prayers, wakyng, fastyng, vertuous teachyng of ousons. And ye shal vnderstonde, that ousons or prayers is to saye a pitious will of herte, that setteth it in God, and expresseth by worde outwarde to remeue harmes, and to haue thynges spirituall and durable, and sometyme temporall thynges. Of which ousons, certes in the oryson of the pater noster: hath Jesu Chryst enclosed moost thynges. Certes it is priuileged of thre thynges in his dignite, for whyche it is more digne than anye other prayer, for that Jesu Chryst hym selfe made it, and it is short, for it shuld be lerned þ more lyghtly, & to holde it the more ralye in herte, and helpe hym selfe the ofter with that ouson: And for a manne shulde be the lesse werye to saye it, & not excuse hym to lerne it, it is so shorte and ralye: and for it comprehendeth in it selfe all good prayers. The exposition of this holy prayer that is so excellent and digne, I refere to the maisters of theology, saue thus moche will I saye, that whan thou prayest, that God shoulde forgeue the thyne offences, as thou forgeuest them that haue offended the. Be well ware that thou be not oute of charitye. This holy ouson amunisheth also venial syn and therfore it appertayneth specyally to penitence.

This prayer must be truly sayd and in parfyte fayth, and that men praye to God ordinately, discretly, and deuoutly, and alwaye a man shall put his wyll to be subiecte to the wyll of God. This oryson muste also be sayd with great humblenesse and full pure & honestlye, and not to the auoyaunce of anye man or woman: It muste also be continued with the workes of charitie. It auayleth also ayenst the vices of the soule: For as saith sayntt Jerome: By fastyng ben saued the vices of the flesshe, and by prayer the vyces of the soule.

After this thou shalt vnderstond, that bodily prayer stont in wakyng. For Jesu chryst sayth: wake ye and praye, that ye ne entre in to wycked temptation. Ye shul vnderstonde also, that fastyng stont in thre thynges: In forberyng of bodily mete and drinke, in forberyng of worldly iolitie, and in forberynge of deedly syn: this is to say: that a man shall kepe hym fro deedly syn with all his myght.

And thou shalt vnderstond also that god ordayned fastynge, and to fastynge pertayneth four thynges. Largenesse to yeue folke gladnesse of herte spirituall: not to be angrye ne anoyed ne grutche for he fasteth and also resonable hour to eat by measure, that is to saye a man shall not eate in vntyme, ne syt the lenger at the table, for he fasteth.

Than shalt thou vnderstonde, that bodily payne stont in disciplyne or teachynge by worde or wrytynge, or by example. Also in wearynge of heer or stamyn or of harbergions on her naked flesshe for Chrystes sake, and that suche maner penaunces, ne make nat thyne herte bytter or angrye, ne anoyed of thy selfe, for better is to cast awaye thyne heere, than to cast away the swetnesse of Jesu Chryst. And therfore sayth sayntt Poule: Clothe you as they that ben chosen of God in herte of mercy, debonairte, suffraūce and suche maner of clothyng, of which Jesu Chryste is more pleased, than with heeres or habergions.

Than is disciplyne also, in knockynge of thy brest, in scourgyng with roddes, in kneelyng, in tribulacion, in suffrynge pacientlye wronges that ben do to the, & also in pacíẽt suffrynge of sycknesse, or lesyng of worldlye goodes or catell, or wyfe, chylde, or other frendes.

Than shalt thou vnderstande which thinges disstourbe penaunce, and that is in foure maners, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is desperacion: And for to speake fyrste of drede for whiche he weneth that he maye suffre no penaunce. There ayenst is remedy for to thynke that bodilye penaunce is but shorte and lytle, at regarde of the payne of hell that is so cruell and so longe, that it lasteth without ende.

Nowe ayenst the shame that a man hath to shryue hym, and namely these ypocrytes that wold be hold so perfyte, that they haue no nede to shryue hem. Ayenste that shame shulde a man thynke that by way of reason, that he that hath not be ashamed to do foul thynges: certes hym ought not be ashamed for to do fayre thynges, and that is cõfessyons. A man shuld also thinke that god seeth and knoweth all his thoughtes and all hys werkes: To hym may nothyng be hyd ne couered. Also shoulde also remembre hem of the shame that is to com at the day of dome to hem that ben not penitent and shryuen in this present lyfe. For all the creatures in erth and in hell shall se apertly, all that they hydde in this present worlde. Nowe for to speake of the hope of hem that bene so negligent and slow to shryue them: that stondeth in two maners. That one is, that he hopeth for to lyue longe, and for to purchace moche rychesse for his delyte, and thẽ he wol shryue hym: And as he sayeth, hym semeth than tymely ynough to come to shryft.

An other is of surquidrie that he hath in christes mercy. Ayenst the fyrst vyce he shal thynke that our lyfe is in no sykernesse, and also that all the rychesses in this worlde ben in aduenture, and passe as a shadowe on the wall: And as sayth sayncte Gregorye, that it appertayneth to the great ryghtwysnesse of god, that neuer shal the payne stynte of hem that neuer wold withdrawe hem fro synne for thankes, but euer continued in synne: for that perpetuall wyll to do synne, shall they haue perpetuall payne. Wanhope is in two maners. The fyrst wanhope is in the mercy of god. That other is that they thynke that they ne myght not longe persheuer in goodnesse. The fyrste wanhope commeth of that he demeth that he hath synned so greatly & so oft and so longe lyen in synne, that he shal not be saued. Certes agaynst that cursed wanhope shuld he thynke that the passion of Jesu Christe is more stronge for to vnbynde, than synne is stronge for to bynde. Ayenste the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as often as he falleth he maye ryse agayne by penitence: and though he neuer so long hath lyen in synne, the mercy of Christ is alwayes redy to receyue hym to mercye. Ayenste the wanhope that he deemeth, he shoulde not longe persheuer in goodnesse, he shall thynke, that the feblenesse of the deuyl may nothyng do but yf men woll suffre hym, and also he shall haue stregth of the helpe of Jesu christ and of all holye churche, and the protection of angels yf hym lyst.

Than shal men vnderstande what is the fruyte of penaunce, and after the wordes of Jesu Christ, it is endelesse bleste of heauen. There ioye hath neuer ende, no contrariete of wo ne grenaunce: there al harmes ben passed of this present lyfe, there as is sykernes fro the payne of hell, there as is the blysshull company that reioyse hem euermore, euerich of others ioye: there as the body of man, that somtyme was foule and darke, is more clere than the sunne: there as the body that somtyme was sycke, freyle, and feble and mortall, is immortall, and so stronge and hole, that there ne maye nothyng appeyre it: there as is neyther hunger, thurst ne colde, but euery soule replenysshed with the syght of the perfyte knowynge of God. This blysshull reygne may men purchace by pouerte spirituel, and the glory by lowenesse, the plente of ioye by hungre and thurst, and the rest by trauayle, and the lyf by deth and mortificacion of syn: to whiche lyfe he vs bring that bought vs with his precious bloude. Amen.

Here endeth the persons tale.

Here begynneth the Plowmans Prologue.

The Plowman plucked vp his plowe.
whan my dyscrecyon come was comen in.
And sayd his beedes shold eate ynowe
And lyge in the grasse vp to the chynne
They ben feble both ore and ynne
Of hem nys left but bone and synnue
The flesshe of hem and cuitre of dyrtne
And hongy ful hardely on a pynne.

¶ He toke his tabarde and his staffe eke
And on his heed he set his hat.
And sayde he wolde sayut Thomas seke
On pylgrymage he goth forth platte.
In scrippe he bare both breed and lekes
He was forswonke and all forswatte
Men myght haue sene thrugh both his cheke
And eurry yoang toth and where it sat (lees

¶ Our hoste beheelde wele all about
And sawe this man was sumne pylgrym
He knewe well by his fenged mouthe
And by his clothes that were to rent
He was a man wont to walke about
He nas nat alway in cloystre ypent
He couthe not religyously the loute
And therfore was he fully shent.

¶ Our host him axed, what man art thou
Syr (quod he) I am an hyne
For I am wont to go to the plowe
And erne my meate yer that I dyne
To swete and swynke I make auowe
My wyfe and thyldren therwith to fynde
And serue God and I wyst howe
But we leude men bene full blynde.

¶ For clerkes saye we shullen be fayne
For her lyuelod swet and swynke
And they ryght nought vs gyue agayne
Neyther to eate ne yet to drynke
The mowe by lawe, as they sayne
Vs curse and dampne to hell bryuke
Thus they putten vs to payne
With candles quenyt and belles clynke.

¶ They make vs thralles at her lust
And sayne we mowe nat els be saued
They haue the corne and we the dust
Who speaketh ther agayn they say he raued
¶ what man q̄ our host, canst thou preache
Come nere and tell vs some holy thynge
¶ Syr quod he, I herde ons teache
A preest in pulpyt a good preachynge

¶ Saye on quod our host, I the beseche.
Syr I am redy at your byddyng
I praye you that noman me reproche
whyle that I am my tale tellynge.

Thus endeth the prologue, and here folowyth the fyrst parte of the tale.

A sterne



Aforne ſoyle is ſtered newe
In many ſtedes in a ſtrounde
Of ſtidyy ſedes that bene ſtrewe
It ſemeth that ſom hen bnſounde
For ſome be great growen bngrounde
Some ben ſouble, ſymple and ſmall
whether of hem is faiſter founde
The faiſer ſoule mote hym befall

¶ That one ſyde is that I of tell
Popes, cardynals and prelates
Parſons, monkes, and freers fell
Priours, abbotres of great eſtates
Of heuyn and hell they kepe the yates
And Peters ſucceſſours they ben all
This is demed by olde dates
But faithed ſoule mought it befall

¶ The other ſyde ben poore and pale
And people put out of preaſe
And ſtrong cayteyffes for a cale
And euer in one without encreaſe
I clepeth lollers and londieſe
who toteth on hem they bene bntall
They den arayed all for the peace,
But faithed ſoule mote it befall.

¶ Many a ſountrey haue I ſought
To knowe the faiſer of theſe two
But euer my trauayle was for nought
All ſo ferre as I haue go
But as I wandred in a wro
In a wodde beſyde a wall
Two ſoules ſame I ſpere tho
The faiſer ſoul mote hym befall.

¶ That one hyd pipe on the Popes ſyde
A gryffon of a grysume ſtature
A Pellycane withouten pryde
To thoſe lollers layde his lure
He muſed his matter in meaſure
To counſayle Chryſt euer gan he call
The gryffon ſhewed as ſharpe as fyre
But faithed ſoule mote it betall.

¶ The Pellycan began to preache
Both of merry and of meknelle
And ſayd that Chryſt ſo gan vs teache
And meke and merryable gan bieſſe
The Euangely beareth wytneſſe
A lambe he lyſteneth Chriſt ouer all
In tokenynge that he meked was
Both pryde was out of heuen fall.

¶ And ſo ſhulde euery Chriſtned be
Preeſtes, Peters ſucceſſours
Both lowlyche and of lowe degree.
And vſen none erthly honours

Agyde

Neyther crowne ne curious couetours
Ne pylloure ne other proude pall
Ne nought to coffren vp great treasours
For falshed foule mote it befall

¶ Preests shulde for no cattel plede.
But chasten hem in chaunte
Ne to no bateyle shulde men lede
For mhaunsyng of her owne degree
Ne wyne syttynges in bye ste
Ne louerayntie in bouse ne hall
All worldly worshippe defye and flee
For who so wylleth bigtines foule shall fall

¶ Alas who may suche sawtes call
That wylneth welde erthlye honour
Is lowe as Lucifere suche shall fall
In baleful blacknesse yburyden her boure
That eggeth the people to errour
And maketh them to hem thrall
To Christ I holde suche one traytour
Is lowe as Lucifer suche one shall fall.

¶ That wylleth to be kynges peeres
And brother than the Emperour
Some that were but poore freers
Newe wollen ware a warryour
God is nat her gouernour.
That holdeth noman his permagall
Envie couetyse is her counsaylour
All suche falshed mote nede fall.

¶ That hye on horse wylleth ryde
In glytterande golde of great araye
Iparuted and portred all in pryde
As comen knyght maye go so gaye
Chaunge of clothyng euery daye
With golden gyrdles great and small
As boystous as is bere at baye
All suche falshed mote nede fall.

¶ With pryde punyshed the poore
And some they sustayne with sale
Of holy churche maketh an hore
And fylleth her wombe with wyne and ale
With money fylleth many a male
And chaffren churches when they fall
And telleth the people a leude tale
Suche false faytours foule them befall.

¶ With chaunge of many maner meates
With songe and solace syttynge longe
And fylleth her wombe, and fast fretes
And from the meate to the gonge
And after meat with harpe and songe
And eche man mote hem lordes call
And hote spyces euer amonge
Suche false faytours foule hem fall

¶ And myters mo than one or two
Iperled as the quenes heed
A staffe of golde, and pyrrey lo
As heuy as it were made of lead
With cloth of golde both newe and redde
With glytterande golde as grene as gall
By dome wyll dampne men to deed
All suche faytours foule hem fall.

¶ And Chrystes people proudly curse
With brode bokes, and brayng bell
To putte pennyes in her purse
They woll sell both heuen and hel
And in her sentence and thou wylt dwell
They wyllen gesse in her gaye hall
And though the soth thou of hem tell
In great cursynge shalt thou fall.

¶ That is blessed, that they blesse
And cursed that they curse woll
And thus the people they oppresse
And haue theyr lordshyppes at full
And many be marchauntes of woll
And to purse pennyes woll come thrall
The poore people they all to pull
Suche false faytours foule hem fall

¶ Lordes mote to hem loute
Obeysaunt to her brode blessyng
They ryden with her royall route
On a courser, as it were a kynge
With saddle of golde glyttryng
With curyous harneys quayntly crallyt
Stryroppes gaye of golde mastlyng
All suche falshed foule befall it.

¶ Chrystes minysters clepen they bene
And rulen all in robberye
But Antichust they seruen clene
Attyred all in tyrannye
Wytnesse of Johns prophecye
That Antichuste is her admirall
Tyrelers attyred in trecherye
All suche faytours foule hem fall.
¶ Who sayth that some of hem may synne

Pe shalbe done to be deed
Some of hem woll gladly wynne
All ayenst that whyche god forbed
All holyest they clepen her heed
That of her rule is regall
Alas that euer they eten breed
For all suche falshed woll foule fall

¶ Her heed loueth all honour
And to be worshypped in worde and dede
Kynges mote to hem knele and coure
To the Apostles, that chryst forbede
To Popes hestes suche taketh more hede
Than to kepe Chrystes cómaundement
Of gold and syluer mote ben her wede
They holdeth hym hole omnipotent

¶ He ordayneth by his ordynaunce
To parysh preestes a powere
To another a greater auaunce
A greater poynt to his mystere
But for he is hyghest in erth here
To hym reserueth he many a poynt
But to Chryst that hath no pere
Reserueth he neyther opyn ne foynt

¶ So semeth he aboue all
And Chryst abouen hym nothyng
whan he syttyth in his stall
Dampneth and sauyth as hym thynke
Suche pryde tofore god doth stynke
An Angell bad John to hym nat knele
But only to god do his bowynge
Such wylleers of worshyp must nede euyll (fele.

¶ They ne clepen Chryst, but servs deus
And clepen her heed Sanctissimus
They that suche a sect sewys
I trowe they taken hem amysse
In erth here they haue her blysse
Her hye maister is Belyal
Chrystes people from hem wysse
For all suche falsse wyll foule fall.

¶ They mowe both bynde and lose
And all is for her holy lyfe
To saue or dampne they mowe chose
Betwene hem now is great stryfe
Many a man is kylled with a knyfe
To wete which of hem haue lordshyp shall
For suche Chryst suffred woundes fyue
For all suche falshed wyll foule fall.

¶ Chryst sayd: Qui gladio percutit
with swerde shall dye
He bad his preestes peace and gryth
And bade hem not drede for to dye
And bad them be both symple and slye
And carke not for no cattall
And trusteth on god that sytteth on hye
For all falsse shull foule fall.

¶ These wollen make men to swere
Ayenst Chrystes cómaundement
And Chrystes membres all to tere
On roode, as he wer newe ytent
Suche lawes they make by cómen assent
Echeon it chooseth as a ball
Thus the poore be fully shent
But euer falshed foule it betall.

¶ They vsen no symonye
But sellen churches and prayers
Ne they vsen no enuye
But cursen all hem contrarves
And hyreth men by dayes and yeres
with strength to holde hem in her stall
And culleth all her aduersaryes
Therfore falshed foule thou fall

¶ with purse they purchase persónage
with purse they paymen hem to plede
And men of warre they woll wage
To bringe her enemyes to the dede
And lordes lyues they woll lede
And moche take, and gyue but small
But he it so get, from it shall shede
And make suche falsse ryght foule fal

¶ They halowe nothyng but for hyre
Churche, font, ne vestement
And make orders in euery shyre
But preestes paye for the parchement
Of ryatours they taken rent
Therwith they smere the shyppes shall
For many churches ben ofte suspent
All suche falshed yet foule it fall.

Some lyueth nat in lecherye
But haunten wenches, widdowes & wyues
And punysheth the poore for purye
Them selfe it vseth all theyr lyues
And but a man to them shryues
To heuen come neuer he shall
He shalbe cursed as be caytyues

The

Cohell they sayne that he shall fall

¶ There was more mercy in Martimyen
And in Nero, that neuer was good
Than is nowe in some of them
whan he hath on his furred hoode
They folowe Christ that shedde his blode
To heuen, as buckette in to the wall
Suche wrecches ben worse than wode
And all suche faytours foule hem fall

¶ They gyue her almesse to the ryche
To maynteynours and to men of lawe
For to lordes they woll be lyche
An harlottes sonne nat worthe an hawe
Godlasnesse suche han slawe
They kembe her crokettes with christall
And bede of god they haue downe drawe
All suche faytours foule hem fall

¶ They maken parsons for the penny
And canons of her cardynals
Unnethes amongest hem all any
That he ne hath gloted the gospell fals
For Christ made neuer no cathedrals
Ne with hym was no cardynall
with a redde hatte as dyen mynstrals
But fall shed foule mote it befall

¶ Their sythyng and her offryng both
They clemeth it by possessyon
Therof nyll they none forgo
But robben men as raunsome
The sythyng of Turpe lucrum
with these maisters is meynall
Sythyng of bribry and larson
wyll make falshed full foule to fall

¶ They taken to ferme her sompnours
To harme the people what they may
To pardoners, and false faytours
Sell her seales I dare well say
And all to holden great array
To multiply hem more metall
They drede full lytell domes day
whan all suche shall foule fall

¶ Suche harlottes shull men dyslaunder
For they shullen make her gree
And ben as proude as Alexaunder
And sayne to the poore, woo be ye
By pere eche preeste shall paye hys fee
To encrease hys lemmans call
Suche heerdes shull well yuell the
And all suche false shull foule fall

¶ And yf a man be falsely famed
And wolde make purgacioun
Than woll the officers be agramed
And assigne hym fro towne to towne
So nede he must paye raunsome
Though he be cleue, as is chrystall
And than haue an absolucioun
But all suche false shull foule fall

¶ Though he be gylte of the dede
And that he maye money pay
All the whyle his purse woll blede
He maye vse it fro day to day
These bysshoppes officers gone full gay
And thys game they vsen ouer all
The poore to pyll is all theyr play
All suche false shull foule fall

¶ Alas, god ordayned neuer suche lawe
Ne no suche crafte of couetyse
He forbade it by hys sawe
Suche gouernours mowen of god agryse
For all his rules is ryghtwyse
These newe poyntes ben pure papall
And goddes lawe they dispyse
And all suche faytours shul foule fall

¶ They sayne that Peter had the key
Of heuyn and hell to haue and holde
I trowe Peter toke no money
For no synnes that he solde
Suche successours ben to bolde
In wynnyng all theyr wytte they wrall
Her conscience is waxen colde
And all suche faytours foule hem fall

¶ Peter was neuer so great a fole
To leaue hys key with suche a lorell
Or to take suche cursed suche a tole
He was aduysed nothyng well
I trowe they haue the key of hell
Their maister is of that place marshall
For there they dresten hem to dwell
And with false Lucifere there to fall

¶ They ben as proude as Lucifere
As angry and as enuyous
From good faythe they ben full farre

In couetyse they ben curyous
To catche catell as couytous
As houde that for hunger woll yall
Ungoodly and ingracious
And nedely suche falshed shal soule fall

¶ The pope and he were Peters heyre
We thynke he erreth in this case
whan choyse of byshoppes is in disheyre
To chosen hem in dyuers place
A lorde shall write to hym for grace
For hys clerke anere play he shall
So shall he spede hys purchase
And all suche falce soule hem fall

¶ Though he can no more good
A lordes prayer shalbe spedde
Though he be wylde of wyll or wood
Nat vnderstandyng what men han redde
A leude bostet, and that god forbede
As good a byshoppe is my horse tail
Suche a Pope is foule be stedde
And at last woll foule fall

¶ He maketh byshoppes for erthly thanke
And nothyng for Christes sake
Suche that ben full fatte and ranke
To soule heale none hede they take
All is well done what euer they make
For they shal answere at one fors all
For worldes thanke, suche worch and wake
And all suche falce shall foule fall

¶ Suche that canne nat her Crede
wyth prayer shull be made prelates
Nother canne the gospell rede
Suche shull nowe welde hye estates
The hye goodes frendshyp hem makes
They toteth on her somme totall
Suche bere the keyes of hell yates
And all suche falce shall foule fall

¶ They forsake for Christes loue
Traueyle, hunger, thurst, and colde
For they ben ordred euer all aboue
Out of youthe tyl they ben olde
By the deze they go, nat in to the folde
To helpe theyr shepe they nought trauail
Hyred men all suche I holde
And all suche falce foule hem fall

¶ For Christ her kyng they woll forsake
And knowe hym nought for hys powere
For Christes loue they woll wake
And drynke pyement ale aparte
Of god they seme nothyng a frede
As lusty lyueth as dyd Lamuall
And dryuen her shepe in to deserte
All suche faytours shull soule fall

¶ Christ hath xii. Apostels here
Nowe say they, there may be but one
That may nat erre in no maniere
who lerneth nat this ben lost echone
Peter erred, so dyde nat John
why is he cleped the principall
Christ cleped hym Peter, but hym self none
All falce faytours soule hem fall

¶ why curlen they the crosserey
Christes christen creatures
For bytwene hem is nowe enuy
To be enhaunsed in honours
And christen lyuers with her labours
Fyr they leuyn on no man mortall
But do to dethe with dishonours
And all suche falce soule hem fall

¶ what knoweth a tyllour at the plowe
The popes name, and what he hate
Hys crede suffyseth to hym knowe
And knoweth a cardynall by hys hatte
Rough is the poore knyghtely latte
That knoweth Christ hys god royall
Suche maters be nat worth a gnatte
But suche falce faytours soule hem fall

¶ A kyng shall knele and kysse hys showe
Christ suffred a synfull to kysse his fete
We thynketh he holdeth hym hye knowe
So Lucifer dyd, that hye sette
Suche one me thynketh hym selfe forgete
Eyther to the trouth he was nat call
Christ that suffred woundes wete
Shall make suche falshed soule fall

¶ They layeth out her large nettes
For to take syluer and golde
Fyllen coffers, and sackes fettes
There as they soules catche sholde
Her seruauntes be to them vnholde
But they can doublyn theyr rentall
To bygge hem castels, and bygge hem holde
And all suche falce soule hem fall.

¶ Here

¶ Here endeth the fyrst parte of thys tale, and herafter foloweth the seconde parte

TO accorde with this worde fal
No more English can I fynde
Shewe another nowe I shall
For I haue moche to saye be-
hynde
Howe preestes han the people pynde
Is auters Christ hath me kende
And putte thys matter in my mynde
To make thys maner men amende

¶ Shortly to shende hem, and shewe nowe
Howe wrongfully they worche and walke
Of bye god, nothyng they tell, ne howe
But in goddes worde, telleth many a balke
In hernes holde hem and in halke
And preachyn of tythes and offrende
And untruely of the gospell talke
For hys merry god it amende

¶ What is Antichrist to saye
But euyn Christes aduersary
Suche hathe nowe ben many a day
To Christes byddyng full contrary
That from the trouthe clene varry
Out of the waye they ben wende
And Christes people untruely cary
God for hys pytie it amende

¶ That lyuen contrary to Christes lyfe
In hye pride agaynst meknesse
Agaynst sufferaunce they vsen stryfe
And angre ayenst sobrenesse
Agaynst wysedome wylfulnesse
To Christes tales lyttell tende
Agaynst measure outragyousnesse
But whan god woll it maye amende

¶ Lordly lyfe ayenst lowlynesse
And demyn all without mercy
And couetyse ayenst largesse
Agaynst trewth trechery
And agaynst almesse enuy
Agaynst Christ they comprehende
For chastyte they maynteyne lechery
God for hys grace thys amende

¶ Ayenst penaunce they vse delyghtes
Ayenst sufferaunce stronge defence
Ayenst god they vsen yuel rightes
Agaynste pytie punishementes
Open yuell ayenst contynence
Her wycked wynnyng worse dispende
Sobrenesse they sette in to dispence
But god for hys goodnesse it amende

¶ Why clergymen they holy hys powere
And wranglen ayenst all hys hestes
Hys lyuyng folowen they nothyng here
But lyuen worse than wytlesse beestes
Of fyshe and flesshe they louen feestes
As lordes they ben brode yknende
Of goddes poore they haten gestes
God for hys merry thys amende

¶ With Dyuers suche shall haue her dome
That sayne that they be Christes frendes
And do nothyng as they shulde done
All suche ben falser than ben fendes
On the people they ley suche bendes
As god is in erthe they han offende
Sharpe for suche Christ nowe sende vs
And for hys merry thys amende

¶ A token of Antichrist they be
Hys tareckes ben nowe wyde yknowe
Receyued to preche shall no man be
wythout token of hym I trowe
Eche christen preest, to prechyn owe
From god aboue they ben sende.
Goddes worde, to all folke for to showe
Hymfull man for to amende

¶ Christ sente the poore for to preche
The royall ryche he dyd nat so
Nowe dare no poore the people teche
For Antichrist is ouer all her foe
Amonge the people he mote go
He hath bydden, all suche suspende
Some hath he hente, and thynketh yet mo
But all thys god may well amende

¶ All tho that han the worlde forsake
And lyuen holy, as god badde
In to her prison shullen be take
Betyn and bounden, and forthe ladde
Herof I rede no man be dradde
Christ sayd, hys shulde be shende
Eche man ought herof be gladde
For god full well it woll amende

¶ They take on hem royall powere
And saye they haue swerdes two
One curse to hell, one slee men here
For at hys taking Christ had no mo
Yet Peter had one of tho
But Christ, to Peter sinyte gan defende
And in to the sheth badde putte it tho
And all suche myscheues god amende

¶ Christ badde Peter kepe his shepe
And with his swerde forbade hym sinyte
Swerde is no tole with shepe to kepe
But to sheperdes that shepe will byte
Aye thynketh suche sheperdes ben to wyte
Ayen her shepe with swerde that contende
They driue her shepe with great dispyte
But all thys god may well amende

¶ No successours to Peter be they nought
Whom Christ made chefe pastoure
A swerde no sheperde vsen ought
But he wold slee, as a bochoure
For who so were Peters successour
Shulde bere hys shepe tyll hys backe bende
And shadowe hem from euery shoure
And all thys god maye wel amende

¶ Successours to Peter ben these
In that that Peter Christ forsoke
That had leuer the loue of god lese
Than a sheperde had to lese his boke
He culleth the shepe as dothe the coke
Of hem taken the woll vntrende
And falsely glose the gospell boke
God for his mercy them amende

¶ After Christ had take Peter the kay
Christ sayd, he muste dye for man
That Peter to Christ gan withsay
Christ badde hym go behynde Sathan
Suche counsaylours many of these men han
For worldes wele, god to offende
Peters successours they ben for than
But all suche god may well amende

¶ For Sathan is to say no more
But he that contrary to Christ is
In thys they lerne Peters lore
They sewen hym whan he dyd mysse
They folowe Peter forsothe in thys
In al that Christ wolde Peter reprehende
But nat in that that longeth to heuyn blysse
God for hys mercy hem amende

¶ Some of the Apostels they sewen in tale
Of ought that I can vnderstonde
Hym that betrayed Christ, Judas
That bare the purse in euery londe
And al that he myght sette on honde
He hydde and stale, and myspende
His rule these traytours han in honde
Almighty God hem amende

¶ And at last hys lorde gan tray
Cursedly through hys false couetyse
So wolde these, trayen hym for money
And they wysten in what wyse
They be seker of the selfe emprise
From all sothenesse they ben frende
And couetyse chaungen with queyntyse
Almighty God all suche amende

¶ Were Christ on erthe here efte sone
These wolde dampne hym to dye
All hys hestes they han fordone
And sayne his sawes ben hereby
And ayenst his commaundementes they sye
And dampne all hys to be brende
For it lyketh nat hem suche losengery
God almighty hem amende

¶ These han more myght in Englande ben
Than hath the kynge and all hys lawe
They han purchased hem suche powere
To taken hem whom lyste nat knawe
And say that hereby is her sawe
And so to prysone woll hem sende
It was nat so by elder dawe
God for hys mercy it amende

¶ The kynges lawe wol no man deme
Angerlyche withouten answere
But yf any man these myscheues
He shalbe dawgted as a bere
And yet wel worse they woll hym dere
And in prysone woll hem pende
In gyues, and in other gere
Whan God woll, it maye mende

¶ The kyng tareth nat hys men
But by assente of the comynalte
But these eche yere woll raunsom hem
Warsterfully, more than doth he
Her scales by yere better be

Than

Than is the kynges in ertende
Her officers han greter fre
But thys mischefe god amende

¶ For who so woll proue a testament
That is natt all worthe tenne pounde
He shall paye for the parchement
The thyrde parte of the money all rounde
Thus the people is raunsounde
They saye suche parte to hem shulde apende
There as they grypen it gothe to grounde
God for hys mercy it amende

¶ Symple fornycatioun
Twenty shyllynges he shall paye
And than haue an absolution
And all the yere vsen it forthe he maye
Thus they letten hem go a stray
They recke nat though the soule be brende
These keppyn wyell Peters key
And all suche shepeerdes God amende

¶ Wonder is that the parlyament
And all the lordes of thys londe
Here to taken so lytell entent
To helpe the people out of her honde
For they ben harder in theyr bonde
Wors beate and bytter brende
Than to the kyng is vnderstande
God hym helpe thys to amende

¶ What bysshoppes, what relygions
Han in thys lande as moche laye fee
Lordshyppes and possessyons
More than the lordes, it semeth me
That maketh hem lese charyte
They mowe nat to God attende
In erthe they haue so hyghe degree
God for hys mercy it amende

¶ The Emperour yaf the pope somtyme
So hyghe lordshyp hym aboute
That at laste the sely kyme
The proude Pope putte hym out
So of thys realme is in doute
But lordes be ware and them defende
For nowe these folke be wonder stoute
The kynge and lordes nowe thys amende.

¶ Thus endeth the seconde parte of this tale, and hereafter folowe the thyrde.

MOyses lawe forbode it tho
That preestes shulde no lordshyppes welde
Christes Gospel byddeth also
That they shulde no lordshyppe helde
Ne Christes Apostels were neuer so bolde
No suche lordeshyppes to them embrace
But smeren her shepe and kepe her folde
God amende hem for hys grace

¶ For they ne ben but countrefete
Men may knowe hem by her fruite
Her gretnesse maketh hem god forgete
And take hys mekenesse in dispyte
And they were poore and had but lyte
They nolde nat demen after the face
But norysshe her shepe, and hem nat byte
God amende hem for hys grace

¶ Gyson.

¶ What canst thou preche ayenst chanons
That men clepen seculere
Pely. They ben curates of many townes
On erthe they haue great powere
They han great prebendes and dere
Some two or three, and some mo
A personage to ben a playeng fere
And yet they serue the kynge also

¶ And lette to ferme all that fare
To whom that woll most gyue therfore
Some woll spende, and some woll spare
And some woll laye it vp in store
A cure of soule they care nat fore
So they mowe money take
whether her soules be wonne or lore
Her profytes they woll nat forsake

¶ They haue a gederyng procuratour
That can the poore people enplede
And robben hem as a raueynour
And to hys lorde the money lede
And catche of quicke and eke of dede
And riche a hym and hys lorde eke
And to robbe the poore can gyue good rede
Of olde and yonge, of hole and syke

¶ Therwith they purchase hem lay fee
In londe, there hem lyketh best
And buylde also brode as a tyte

Bothe in the Eſt, and eke in the weſt
To purchaſe thus they ben ful preſt
But on the poore they woll nought ſpende
Ne no good gyue to goddes geſt
Ne lende hym ſome that all hath lende

¶ By her ſeruyce ſuche woll lyue
And trulle that other in to treaſour
Though all her paryſhe dye vnſhriue
They woll nat gyue a roſe floure
Her lyfe ſhulde be as a myrrour
Bothe to lered and to leude alſo
And teche the people her leſe labour
Suche myſter men ben all myſgo.

¶ Some of hem ben harde nygges
And ſome of hem ben proude and gay
Some ſpende her good vpon gyggys
And fynden hem of great aray
Alas, what thynke theſe men to ſay
That thus diſpenden goddis good
At the dredefull domes daye
Suche wretches ſhulde be worſe than wood

¶ Some her churces neuer ne ſye
Ne neuer o peny thyder ne ſende
Though the poore pariſhens for hungre dye
O peny on hem wyl they nat ſpende
Haue they receyuynge of the rente
They recke neuer of the remenant
Alas the deuyll hath clene hem blent
Suche one is Sathanas ſotournant

¶ And vſen horedome and harlotry
Couetyſe, pompe, and pride
Slouthe, wrathe, and eke enuy
And ſewen ſynne by euery ſyde
Alas, where thynke ſuche tabyde
Howe woll they accomptes yelde
From hye God they mowe hem nat hyde
Suche wyllers wytte is nat worth a nelde

¶ They ben ſo roted in richeſſe
That Chriſtes pouert is forȝet
Serued wyth ſo many meſſe
Hem thynketh that Dauid is no mete
All is good that they mowe gete
They were to lyue euermore
But whan god at dome is ſette
Suche treaſour is a feble ſtore

¶ Unneth mote they matyns ſaye
For countyng and for court holdynge
And yet he iangleth as a iaye
And vnderſtont hym ſelfe nothynge
He woll ſerue bothe erle and kynge
For hys kyndyng and hys fee
And hyde hys tythynge and hys offrynge
This is a feble charite

¶ Other they ben proude, or couetous
Or they ben harde, or hungry
Or they ben lyberall or lecherous
Or els medlers wyth marchandry
Or mayntenners of men wyth maiſtry
Or ſtewardes, countours, or pledours
And ſerue God in hypocriſy
Suche preeſtes ben Chriſtes falſe traytours

¶ They ben falſe, they ben bengrable
And begyten men in Chriſtes name
They ben vnſtedfaſt and vnſtable
To tray her lorde, hem thynketh no ſhame
To ſerue God they ben full lame
Goddes theues, and falſly ſtele
And falſely goddes worde defame
In wymmyng is her worldes wele

¶ Antichriſt theſe ſeruen all
I pray the who may ſay naye
Wyth Antichriſt ſuche ſhull fall
They folowen hym in dede and fay
They ſeruyn hym in ryche aray
To ſerue Chriſt ſuche falſely fayne
Why, at the dredeful domes day
Shull they not folowe hym to payne

¶ That knowen hem ſelfe that they done yll
Ayenſt Chriſtes commaundement
And amende hem neuer ne wyll
But ſerue Sathan by one aſſent
Who ſayth ſothe he ſhalbe ſhent
Or ſpeketh ayenſt her falſe lyuyng
Who ſo well lyueth ſhalbe brent
For ſuche ben greter than the kyng

¶ Pope, Byſhoppes, and Cardynals
Chanons, Perſons, and Vycaire
In goddes ſeruyce I trowe ben falſe
That ſacramentes ſelleu here
And ben as proude as Lucifere
Eche man loke whether that I lye
Who ſo ſpeketh ayenſt her powere
It ſhall be holden hereſy

¶ Loke

¶ Lode howe many orders take
Lucy of Chriſte, for hys ſeruyce
That the worldes goodes forſake
Who ſo taketh orders, or other wyſe
I trowe that they ſhall ſore agryſe
For all the gloſe that they conne
Ill ſemen not thys allyſe
In euell tyme they thus begonne

¶ Lode howe many amonge hem all
Holden not thys hye waye
Wyth Antichriſt they ſhullen fall
For they wolden God betraye
God amende hem that beſt maye
For many men they maken ſhende
They weten well the ſothe I ſaye
But the dyuell hath foule hem blende

¶ Some on her churches dwell
Apparayled poorely, proude of porte
The ſeuen ſacramentes they done ſell
In cattel catchynge is her comforte
Fleſhe matter they wollen mell
And done hem wronge is her diſporte
To affray the people they ben fell
And holde hem lower then doth the lorde

¶ For the tythynge of a ducke
Or of an appl'e, or an aye
They make men ſweare vpon a boke
Thus they foulen Chriſtes fay
Suche beaten euell heauen kay
They mowen alloyle, they mowe ſhryue
Wyth menner wyues ſtrongly play
Wyth true tylliers ſturte and ſtryue

¶ At the wreſtlynge, and at the wake
And thefe chauntours at the nale
Harlotte beaters, and medlynge make
Hoppen and houten wyth heue and hale
At layte freſhe, and at wyne ſtale
Dyne and drynke, and make debate
The ſeuen ſacramentes ſet at ſayle
Howe kepe ſuche the kayes of heuen gate

¶ Wemmes wyues they wollen holde
And though that they ben eyght ſory
To ſpeake they ſhull not be ſo bolde
For lompynge to the conſiſtory
And make hem ſaye mouth I lye
Though they it ſawe wyth her eye
Hys lemman holden openly
No man ſo hardy to ſay why

¶ They woll haue tythynge and offrynge
Maugre who ſo euer it gruche
And twyſe on the daye he woll ſynge
Goddes prieſtes nere none ſuche
He mote on hunteyng wyth dogge and lyche
And blowen hys horne, and cryen hey
And ſorcery vſen as a wytche
Suche kepen euell Peters key

¶ Yet they mote haue ſome ſtocke or ſtone
Gayly paynted, and proudly dyght
To maken men lyuen vpon
And ſaye that it is full of myght
Aboute ſuche, men ſette vp great lyght
Other ſuche ſtockes ſhull ſtande therby
As darke as it were mydnyght
For it maye make no maſtry

¶ That it leude people ſe mowe
Thou Mary, thou worcheſt wonder thynges
Aboute that, that men offren to nowe
Hongen broches, ouches, and rynges
The preeſt purchaſeth the offrynges
But he nyll offre to none ymage
wo is the ſoule that he for ſynges
That prieſcheth for ſuche a pylgrimage

¶ To men and women that ben poore
That ben Chriſtes owne lykeneſſe
Ben ſhullen offre at her doore
That ſuffren honger and dyſtreſſe
And to ſuche ymages offre leſſe
That mowe not fele thurſt ne colde
The poore in ſpriete gan Chriſte bleſſe
Therfore offreth to feble and olde

¶ Buckelers brode, and ſwerdes longe
Baudryke, wyth baſelardes kene
Suche toles about her necke they honge
wyth Antichriſt ſuche prieſtes bene
Upon her dedes it is well ſene
whome they ſeruen, whome they honoren
Antichriſtes they bene clene
And goddes goodes falſly deuouren

¶ Of ſcarlet and grene gay gownes
That mote be ſhape for the newe
To clyppen & kyſſen counten in townes
The damoſeles that to the daunce ſewe
Cutted clothes to ſewe her hewe

wyth longe pykes on her shone
Our goddes gospell is not trewe
Eyther they lerned the dyuell or none

¶ Nowe ben prestes pokes so wyde
That men must enlarge the vestement
The holy gospell they done hyde.
For they contrarien in rayment
Suche prestes of Lucifer ben sent
Lyke conquetours they ben arayde
The proude pendauntes at her ars ypent
Falsely the truthe they han betrayde

¶ Shrifte syluer suche wollen alke is
And woll men crepe to the crouche
None of the sacramentes saue alkes
wythout mede shall no man touche
On her bysshoppe theyr warant vouche
That is lawe of the decre
wyth mede and money thus they mouche
And thus they sayne is charite

¶ In the myddes of her masse
They nyll haue no man but for hyre
And full shortly let forth passe
Suche shull men fynde in eche shyre
That personages for profyte desyre
To lyue in lykynge and in lustes
I dare not sayne, Sans ofe ieo dyre
That suche ben Antichristes prestes

¶ Or they yef the bysshoppes why
Or they mote ben in hys seruyce
And holden forth her harlotry
Suche prelates ben of feble empryse
Of Goddes grame suche men agryse
For suche matters that taken mede
Howe they excuse hem, and in what wyse
Me thynketh they ought greatly drede

¶ They sayne that it to no man longeth
To reproue them though they erre
But falsely goddes goodesse they fongeth
And therwyth maynteyne wo and werre
Her dedes shulde be as bryght as sterre
Her lyuynge, leude mannes lyght
They saye the pope maye not erre
Nede muste that passe manues myght

¶ Though a prest lye wt his lemman al nyght
And tellen hys felowe, and he hym
He goeth to masse anone ryght
And sayeth he syngeth out of synne
Hys byrde abydeth hym at hys ynne
And dyghteth hys dyner the meane whyle
He syngeth hys masse for he woulde wynne
And so he weneth God begyle

¶ Them thynketh longe tyll they be mette
And that they ben forth all the yere
Amonge the folke when he is sette
He holdeth no man halfe hys pere
Of the bysshoppe he hath powere
To soyle men, or elis they ben lore
Hys absolution maye make them shere
And wo is the soule that he syngeth fore

¶ The Gryffon began for to threte
And sayd, of monkes canst thou ought
The Pellycan sayd, they ben full grete
And in thys world moch wo hath wrought
Saynt benet, that her order brought
Ne made hem neuer on suche manere
I trowe it came neuer in hys thought
That they shulde vse so great powre

¶ That a man shulde a monke lorde cal
Me serue on knees, as a kynge
He is as proude as pyrrice in pall
In mete, and drynke, and all thynge
Some wearen myter and cynge
wyth double worsted well vdyght
wyth royall meate and ryche drynke
And rydeth on a courser as a knyght

¶ Wyth hauke and wyth houndes rke
wyth brooches or ouches on hys hode
Some saye no masse in all a weke
Of deynties is her moste foode
wyth lordshyppes and wyth bondmen
Thys is a royall religion
Saynt Benet made neuer none of hem
To haue lordshyppe of man ne towne

¶ Nowe they ben queynte and curious
wyth fyne clothe cladde and serued clene
Proude angry, and enuyous
Malyce is moche that they meane
In catchynge crafty and couetous
Lordly lyuen in great lykynge
Thys lyuynge is not religious
Accordynge to Benette in hys lyuynge

¶ They ben clerkes, her courtes they kerke

per

Her poore tenaunce fully they fyte
The fyne that a man amerced be
The gladlyer they woll it wryte
Thys is farre from Chuſtes powerte
For all wyth couetyſe they endyte
On the poore they haue no pyte
For neuer hem cherythe but euer hem byte

¶ And comenly ſuche ben comen
Of poore people, and of hem begete
That thys perfection han ynomen
Her fathers ryden not but on her fete
And trauaylen ſore for that they ete
In power lyueth yonge and olde
Her fathers ſuffreth drought and wete
Many hongry meles, thurſt, and colde

¶ And all thys the monkes han forſake
For Chuſtes loue and ſayne Benette
To pryde and eaſe haue hem take
Thys religion is ruell beſette
And they ben out of religioun
They muſt haue honged at the plowe
Thefbynge a dykynge fro towne to towne
With fory mete, and not halfe ynowe

¶ Therfore they han thys all forſake
And taken to ryches, pryde, and eaſe
Full ſewe for God woll monkes hem make
Well is ſuche order for to prayſe
Sayne Benet ordayned it not ſo
But badde hem be cherelyche
In charlyche maner lyue and go
Perfous in earth, and not lordlyeh

¶ They diſclaunder ſayne Benette
Therfore they haue hys holy curſe
Sayne Benet wyth hem neuer mette
But yf they thought to robbe hys purſe
I can no more herof tell
For they ben lyke tho before
And clene ſerue the deuell of hell
And ben hys treaſoure and hys ſtore

¶ And all ſuche other counterfaytours
Chanons, Canons, and ſuche diſguyſed
Ben goddes enemyes and traytours
Hys true religion han foule diſpyſed
Of freres I haue tolde before
In a makynge of a Crede
And yet I coulde tell worſe and more
But men wolde werryen it to rede

¶ As goddes goodneſſe no man tell myght
Wryte ne ſpeake, ne thynke in thought
So her falſhed, and her vnryght
May no man tell that euer god wrought
The Gryffon ſayd, thou canſt no good
Thou came neuer of no gentyll kynde
Other I trowe thou wareſt wood
Or elſ thou haſt loſte thy mynde

¶ Shulde holy churche haue no heede
Who ſhulde be her gouernayle
Who ſhulde her rule, who ſhulde her reed
Who ſhulde her forthren, who ſhulde auayle
Eche man ſhall lyue by hys trauayle
Who beſt doth, ſhall haue moſte mede
Wyth ſtrength yf men the churche aſſayle
Wyth ſtrength men muſt defende her nede

¶ And the pope were purely poore
Nedy, and nothynge ne hadde
He ſhulde be dryuen from doore to doore
The wycked of hym nolde not be dradde
Of ſuche an heed men wolde be ſadde
And ſynfully lyuen as hem luſt
Wyth ſtrength, amendes ſuche be made
Wyth wepen wolues from ſhepe be wuſt

¶ Yf the pope and prelates wolde
So begge, and bydde, bowe and borowe
Holy churche ſhulde ſtande full colde
Her ſeruaunces lytte and ſoupe ſore we
And they were noughty foule and horowe
To worſhyppe god men wolde wlate
Bothe on euen and on morowe
Suche harlotry men wolde hate

¶ Therfore men of holy churche
Shulde ben honeſt in all thynge
Worſhypfully goddes workes werche
So ſemeth it to ſerue Chriſt her kynge
In honeſt and in clene clothynge
Wyth veſſels of golde and clothes ryche
To God honeſtly to make offrynge
To hys worſhyppe none is lyche

¶ The Peſſican caſte an houge crye
And ſayd alas, why ſayeſt thou ſo
Chriſt is our heed that ſytteth on hye
Heddes ne ought we haue no mo
We ben hys membres both alſo
And father he taught vs to cal hym als
Paryſheres to be called defended he tho

All

All other mayſters ben wycked and falſe

¶ That taketh mayſtry in hys name
Goddis,and for earthly good
Kynges and lordes ſhulde lordſhyp hane
And rule the people wyth mylde mode
Chriſt for vs that ſhedde hys blode
Badde hys preeſtes no mayſterſhyp haue
Ne carke nat for cloth ne fode
From euery myſchefe he wyll hem ſaue

¶ Her ryche clothynge ſhalbe ryghtwyſneſſe
Her treaſoure,frewe lyfe ſhalbe
Charite ſhalbe her rycheſſe
Her lordſhyppe ſhalbe vnite
Hope in God,her honeſte
Her veſſell clene conſcience
Poore in ſpirite,and humilite
Shalbe holy churches defence

¶ What ſayd the Gryffon may the greue
That other folkes faren wele
what haſte thou to done wyth her lyue
Thy falſheed eche man may fele
For thou canſt no catell gete
But lyueſt in londe as a lorell
wyth glofynge getteſt thou thy mete
So fareth the deuell that wonneth in hell

¶ He wolde that eche mã there ſhulde dwell
For he lyueth in clene enuye
So wyth the tales that thou doeſt tell
Thou woldeſt other people dyſtry
wyth your glofe,and your hereſy
For ye can lyue no better lyfe
But clene in hypocriſy
And bryngeſt the in wo and ſtryfe

¶ And therwyth haue not to done
For ye ne haue here no cure
Ye ſerue the dyuell,neyther God ne man
And he ſhall paye you your hyre
For ye woll fare well at feeſtes
And warme clothed for the colde
Therfore ye glofe goddes heſtes
And begyle the people yonge and olde

¶ And all the ſeuen ſacramentes
Ye ſpeake ayenſt,as ye were fyre
Ayenſt tythynges,offrynges,vp your entẽtes
And on our lordes body falſly lye
And all thys ye done to lyue in eaſe
As who ſayeth,there ben none ſuche
And ſayne the pope is not worth a peaſe
To make the people ayen hym gruche

¶ And thys cõmeth in by fendes
To bryngе the chriſten in dyſtaunce
For they wolde that no man were frendes
Leaue thy chattrynge wyth myſchaunce
yf thou lyue well,what wylt thou more
Let other men lyue as hem lyſt
Spende in good,or kepe in ſtore
Other mennes conſcience neuer thou myſt

¶ Ye han no cure to anſwere for
what meddell ye,that han not to done
Let men lyue as they han done fore
For thou ſhalte anſwere for no man
The Pellican ſayd,Syr,nay
I diſpyſed not the pope
Ne no ſacramente,loth to ſay
But ſpeake in charite and good hope

¶ But I dyſpyſe her hye pryde
Her rycheſſe,that ſhulde be poore in ſpirite
Her wyckednеſſe is knowe ſo wyde
They ſerue god in falſe habyte
And turnen mekeneſſe in to pryde
And lowlyneſſe in to hye degre
And goddes wordes turne and hyde
And that am I moued by charite

¶ To lette men to lyue ſo
wyth all my connynge and al my myght
And to warne men of her wo
And to tell hem trouth and ryght
The ſacramentes be ſoule hele
yf they ben vſed in good vſe
Ayenſt that ſpeake I neuer a dele
For then were I nothynge wyſe

¶ But they that vſen hem in myſſe maner
Or ſette hem vp to any ſale
I trowe they ſhall abye hem dere
Thys is my reaſon,thys is my tale
who ſo taketh hem vnryghtfully
Ayenſt the ten cõmaundementes
Or by gloſe wreched lyche
Selleth any of the ſacramentes

¶ I trowe they do the deuell homage
In that they weten they do wronge
And therto I dare well wage

They

They serue Satan for al her songe
To tythen and offren is holsome lyke
So it be done in dewe maniere
I man to houselyn and to shryue
weddynge, and all the other in fere

¶ So it be nother solde ne bought
Ne take ne gyue for couetyse
And it be so taken it is nought
who selleth hem so, maye sore agryse
On our Lordes body I do not lye
I saye soth thorowe trewe rede
hys flesshe and blode through hys mystrye
Is there, in the forme of brede

¶ Howe it is there, it nedeth not stryue
whether it be substaunce or accydent
But as Christ was, when he was on lyue
So is he there verament
yf pope or cardynall lyue good lyue
Is Christ commaunded in hys gospell
Iwyst that woll I not stryue
But me thynketh they lyue not well

¶ For yf the pope lyued as god bede
Pryde and hyghnesse he shulde dyspyse
Rychesse, couetyse, and crowne on hede
Bekennesse and pouerte he shulde vse
The Gryffon sayd he shulde abye
Thou shalbe brent in balefull fyre
And all thy secte I shall dystroye
Ye shalbe hanged by the swyre

¶ Ye shullen be hanged and to drawe
who gyueth you leaue for to preache
Or speake agaynst goddes lawe
And the people thus falsely teache
Thou shalt be cursed wyth boke and bell
And dysseuered from holy churche
And clene ydampned into hell
Otherwyse but ye woll worche

¶ The Pellycan sayd that I ne drede
Your cursynge is of lytell value
Of god I hope to haue my mede
For it is falshede that ye shewe
For ye ben out of charite
And wyneth vengeaunce, as dyd Nero
To suffren I woll redy be
I drede not that thou canst do

¶ Christ badde ones suffre for hys loue
And so he taught all hys seruauntes
And but thou amende for hys sake aboue
I drede not all thy mayntenaunce
For yf I drede the worldes hate
Me thynketh I were lyteil to prayse
I drede nothynge your hye estate
Ne I drede not your dyspleasse

¶ Wolde ye turne and leaue your pryde
Your hye poste, and your rychesse
Your cursynge shulde not go so wyde
God bryngе you into ryghtwysnesse
For I drede not your tyranny
For nothynge that ye can done
To suffre I am all redy
Wyker I recke neuer howe soone

¶ The Gryffon grynned as he were wode
And loked lourely as an owle
And swore by cockes herte bloode
He wolde hym tere euery doule
Holy churche thou dysclaundrest foule
For thy reasons I woll the all to race
And make thy flesshe to rote and moule
Losell, thou shalte haue harde grace

¶ The Gryffon flewe forth on hys waye
The Pellycane dyd sytte and wepe
And to hym selfe he gan saye
God wolde that any of Christes shepe
Had herde, and yeake kepe
Eche a worde that here sayd was
And wolde it wrytte and well it kepe
God wolde it were all for hys grace

Plowman.

¶ I answerde, and sayd I wolde
yf for my trauayle any man wolde pay
Pelycā. He sayd yes, these ỳ god han solde
For they han store of money
Plowmā. I sayd, tell me and thou may
why tellest thou mennes trespace
Pelycan. He said, to amende hem in good fay
yf God woll gyue me any grace

¶ For Christ hym selfe is lykened to me
That for hys people dyed on rode
As fare I, ryght so fareth he
He fedeth hys brydes wyth hys blode
But these done duell ayenst gode
And ben hys sone vnder frendes face
I tolde hem howe her lyuynge stode
God amende hem for hys grace

Plowman

Plowman. what ayleth ꝑ Gryffon, tell why
That he halleth on that other syde
For they twa ben lykely
And wyth kyndes robben wyde
Pellica. The foule betokeneth pryde
As Lucifer, that hygh flewe was
And syth he dyd hym in euell hyde
For he agylted goddes grace

¶ As hyde flyeth vp in the ayre
And lyueth by hydes that ben meke
So these be flowe vp into dyspayre
And shenden sely soules eke
The soules that ben in synnes seke
He culleth hem, knele therfore alas
For hyghy goddes forbode breke
God amende it for hys grace

¶ The hynder parte is a lyoun
A robber and a rauynere
That robbeth the people in earth a downe
And in erth holdeth none hys pere
So fareth thys foule both ferre and nere
And wyth tepoꝛel strength they people chase
As a lyon proude in earth here
God amende hem for hys grace

Pellican.

¶ The flewe forth wyth hys wynges twayne
All droupynge, dased, and dull
But soone the Gryffon came agayne
Of hys foules the earth was full
The Pellican he had cast to pull
So great a nombre neuer sene there was
what maner of foules tellen I woll
yf God woll gyue me of hys grace

¶ Wyth the Gryffon comen foules fele
Rauyns, rokes, crowes, and pye
Grayfoules, agadred wele
Ygurde aboue they wolde hye
Gledes and bolardes weren hem by
whyte molles and puttockes token her place
And lapwynges, that well cõeth lye
Thys felowshyp han for gerde her grace

¶ Longe the Pellican was out
But at laste he cometh agayne
And broughte wyth hym the Phenix stoute
The Gryffon wolde haue flowe ful fayne
Hys foules that flewen as thycke as rayne
The Phenix tho began hem chace
To flye from hym it was in vayne
For he dyd vengeaunce and no grace

¶ The flewe hem downe wythout mercy
There attacte neyther free ne thrall
On hym they cast a rufull crye
when the Gryffon downe was fall
He bete hem not, but flewe hem all
whyther he hem droue no man may trace
Under the erthe me thought they yall
Alas they had a feble grace

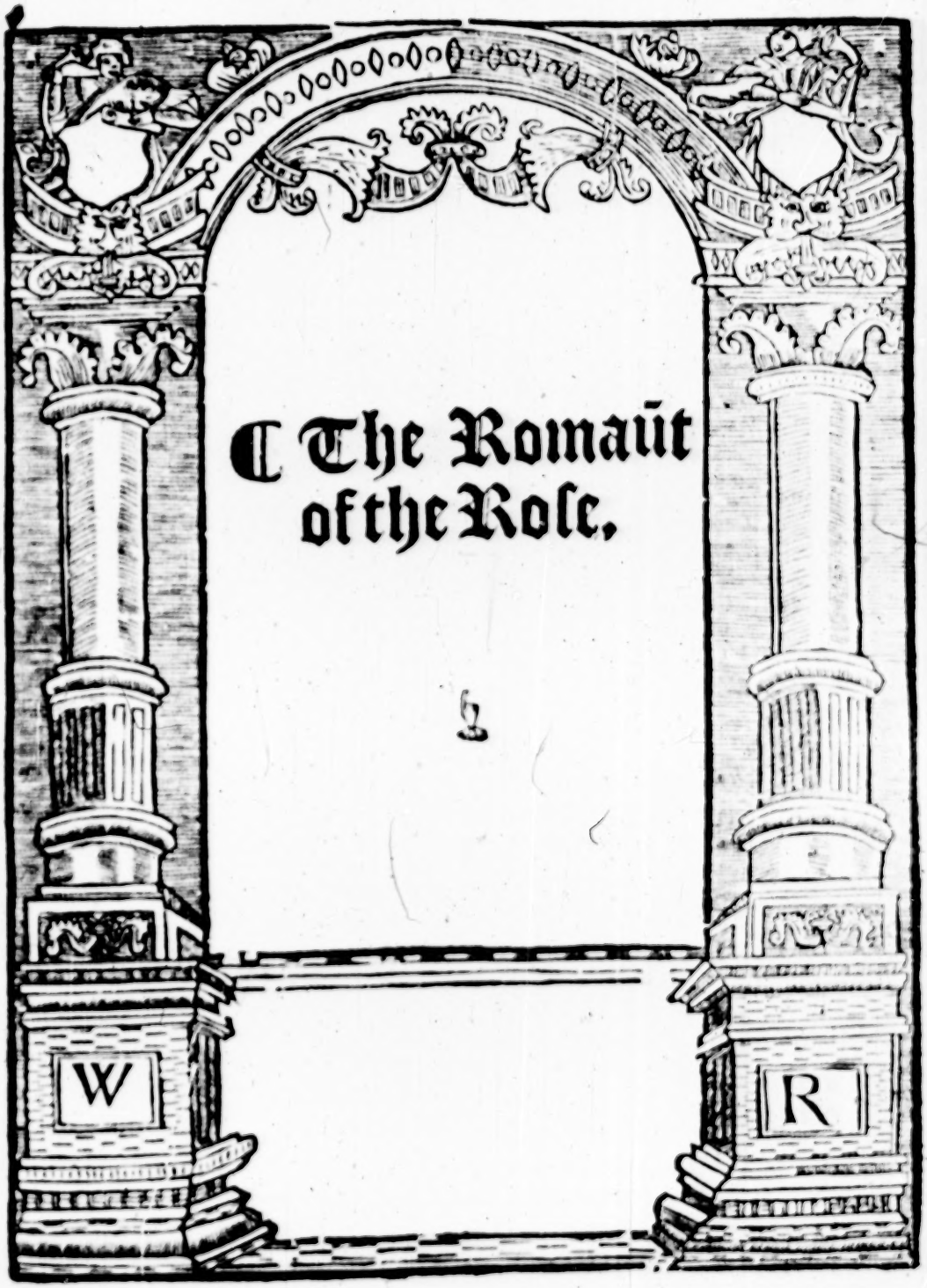
¶ The Pellican then aked ryght
For my wrytynge yf I haue blame
who woll for me fyght of ryght
who shall shelde me from shame
He that had a mayde to dame
And the lambe that slayne was
Shall shelde me from gostly blame
For erthely harme is goddes grace

¶ Therfore I praye euery man
Of my wrytynge haue me excused
Thys wrytynge wryteth the Pellican
That thus these people hath dyspyled
For I am freshe fully aduysed
I nyll not maynteyne hys manace
For the deuell is often dysguyled
To bryngе a man to euell grace

¶ Wyteth the Pellican and not me
For herof I nyl not auowe
In hye ne in lowe, ne in no degre
But as a fable take it ye mowe
To holy churche I wyll me bowe
Eche man to amende hym Chriſt sende space
And for my wrytynge me alowe
He that is almyghty for hys grace

FINIS.

¶ Thus endeth the boke of Caunterbury tales. And here after folowеth the Romaunt of the Rose.



¶ The Romaũt of the Rose.

Many man sayen, that in
swevenynges
There nys but fables & lesynges
But men may some swevenes sene
which hardlye that false ne bene
But afterwarde ben apparaunt
This maye I drawe to warraunt
In author that hyght Macrobes
That halte nat dreames false ne lees
But undoth vs the auysyoun
That whylom mette kyng Cipioun
And whoso sayth, or weneth it be
Iape, or elis nycetie
To wene that dremes after fall
Lette whoso lyst a foole me call
For this trowe I, and saye for me
That dremes signifiaunce be
Of good and harme to many wightes
That dremen in her slepe a nyghtes
Full many thynges couertly
That fallen after all openly
within my twenty yere of age
whan that loue taketh his corage
Of yonge folke, I went soone
To bed as I was wont to done
And fast I slept, and in slepyng
Me met suche a swevenyng
That lyke me wonders wele
But in that swevene is neuer a dele
That it nys afterwarde befal
Right as this dreame wol tell vs all
Now this dreme wol I ryme aryght
To make your hertes gaye and lyght
For loue it prayeth, and also
Comaundeth me that it be so
And yf there any aske me
whether that it be, he or she
How this boke, which is here
Shall hate that I rede here
It is the Romaunce of the Rose
In which all the arte of loue I glose.
¶ The matter fayre is of to make
God graunt me in gre that she it take
For whome that it begone is
And that is she, that hath ywys
So moche prise, and therto she
So worthy is beloued to be
That she well ought of prise and ryght
Be cleped Rose of euery wyght
That it was May me thought tho
It is fyue yere or more ago
That it was May, thus dremed me
In tyme of loue and iolitie
That all thyng gynneth waxen gay
For there is neyther buske nor haye
In May, that it nyl shrouded bene
And it with newe leues wrene
These woddes eke recouren grene
That drye in wynter ben to sene
And the erth wexeth proude withall
For swote dewes that on it fall
And the poore estate forgette
In which that wynter had it sette
And than becometh the ground so proude
That it woll haue a newe shroude
And maketh so queynt his robe and fayre
That it had hewes an hundred payre
Of grasse and floures, ynde and perse
And many hewes full diuers
That is the robe I mene ywys
Through which the ground to prayse is
The brides that han lefte her songe
whyle they han suffred colde full stronge
In wethers grylle, and derke to syght
Ben in may, for the sunne bryght
So glad, that they shewe in syngyng
That in her herte is suche lykyng
That they mote syngen and ben lyght
Than doth the nyghtyngale her myght
To maken noyse, and syngen blythe
Than is blysfull many a sythe
The chelaundre, and the popyngay
Than yonge folke entenden aye
For to ben gay and amarous
The tyme is than so sanorious
Harde is his hert that loueth nought
In May whan al this myrth is wrought
whan he may on these braunches here
The small bryddes syngen clere
Her blysfull swete swete songe pitious
And in this seson delytious
whan loue affirmeth all thynge
Me thought one nyght in my slepyng
Right in my bedde full redely
That it was by the morowe erly
And vp I rose and gan me clothe
Anon I wyth myne hondes both
A syluer nedle forth I drowe
Out of an aguyler queynt ynowe
And gan this nedle threde anon
For out of towne me lyst to gone

The ſowne of briddes for to heare
That on theſe buſſhes ſyngen cleare
That in the ſweete ſeaſon that leſe is
with a threde baſkyng my ſleues
Alone I went in my playing
The ſmall fowles ſonge herkenyng
That payned hem full many a payre
To ſynge on bowes bloſſomed fayre
Ioyfe and gaye, full of gladneſſe
Towarde a ryuer gan I me dreſſe
That I herde renne faſt by
For fayrer playing none ſawe I
Than playen me by that ryuere
For from an hyll that ſtode there nere
Come downe the ſtreme full ſtyffe & bolde
Clere was the water, and as colde
As any well is ſoth to ſayne
And ſomdele laſſe it was than Sayne
But it was ſtrayter, wele awaye
And neuer ſaugh I er that daye
The water that ſo wele lyked me
And wonder gladde was I to ſe
That luſty place, and that ryuere
And with that water that ran ſo clere
My face I waſh, tho ſawe I wele
The botome ypaued euery dele
with grauell, full of ſtones ſheene
The medowes ſofte, ſote and greene
Beet ryght on the waters ſyde
Ful clere was than the morowe tyde
And full attempre out of drede
Tho gan I walken thorowe the mede
Downwarde aye, in my playing
The ryuers ſyde coaſtyng.
And when I had a whyle ygone
I ſawe a Garden ryght anon
Full longe and brode, and euery dele
Enclоſed was, and walled wele
with hye walles enbataryed
Portrayed without and wel entaryed
with many ryche portreytures
And both the ymages and peyntures
Gan I beholde beſely
And I woll tell you redely
Of thilke ymages the ſemblaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce.
Amydde ſawe I hate ſtonde
That for her wrath and yre, and onde
Semed to be a mynoreſſe
And angry with a chydereſſe
And full of gyle, and fell corage
By ſemblaunt was that ylke ymage
And ſhe was nothyng wele arayed
But lyke a wode woman afrayed
Yfrounced foule was her vyſage
And grymmyng for diſpytous rage
Her noſe ſtoped vp for tene
Full hydous was ſhe for to ſene
Ful foule and ruſty was ſhe this
Her heed ywrythen was ywys
Full grymly with a great towayle.
¶ An ymage of an other entayle
A lyſte halfe was her faſt by
Her name above her heed ſawe I
And ſhe was called Felony
¶ An other ymage that byſſany
Ycleped was ſawe I and fonde
Upon the wall on her right honde
Vyllany was lyke ſomdele
That other ymage, and trulleth wele
She ſemed a wicked creature
By countenaunce in portreture
She ſemed be full diſpytous
And eke full proude, and outragious
wel coulde be payntꝰ I vndertake
That ſuche an ymage coulde make
Full foule and chorliſh ſemed ſhe
And eke vyllanous for to be
And lyte coulde of norture
To worſhyppe any creature.
¶ And nere was payntꝰ Couetyſe
That eggeth folke in many a gyſe
To take and yeue ryght nought agayne
And great treaſures vp to layne
And that is ſhe that for vſure
Lenyth to many a creature
The laſſe for the more wynnyng
So couetous is her beginnyng
And that is ſhe for pennes frele
That teacheth for to robbe and ſteele
Theſe theues and theſe ſmall harlotes
And that is routh, for by her thotes
Full many one hongreth at the laſt
She maketh folke compaſſe and caſt
To taken other folkes thynge
Through robbery and myſcouetyng
And that is ſhe that maketh treſchours
And ſhe maketh falſe pledours
That with her termes and her domes
Done maydens, chyldren, and eke gromes
Her herytage to forgo
Full croked were her hondes two
For couetyſe is euer wode
To gryppen other folkes good

Couetyſe

Couetyse, for her wynnyng
Full lefe hath other mens thyng
¶ In other ymage sette saugh I
Nert Couetise fast by
And she was cleped Auaryce
Ful foule in payntyng was that yice
Full sad and caytyfe was she eke
And also grene as any leke
So euyll hewed was her coloure
Yet semed to haue lyued in langour
She was lyke thyng for hungre deed
That had her lyfe onely by breed
Kneden with eyseil strouge and egre
And therto she was leane and megre
And she was clad full poorely
All in a torne courtpy
As she were al with dogges torne
And both behynde and eke before
Clouted was she beggarly
A mantell honge her fast by
Upon a benche weke and small
A burnyt cote honge there withall
Furred with no menyuere
But with a furre rough of heere
Of lambe skynnes heuy and blake
It was ful olde I vndertake
For Auarice to cloth her wele
Ne hasteth her neuer a dele
For certaynly it were her lothe
To wearen oft that vlke clothe
And yf it were forweared she
wolde haue full great nyeede
Of clothyng er she bought her newe
All were it bad of woll and hewe
This Auarice held in her hande
A purse that honge by a bande
And that she hydde and bonde so stronge
Men must abyde wonder longe
Out of the purse or there come ought
For that ne cometh in her thought
It was not certayne her entent
That fro that purse a peny went
And by that ymage nygh ynough
was paynted Enuy that neuer lough
Nor neuer wel in her herte ferde
But yf she eyther sawe or herde
Some great myschaunce or great disese
Nothyng may so moche her plese
As myschefe and mysaduenture
Or whan she seeth discomfyture
Upon any worthy man fall
Than lyketh her well withall
She is full glad in her corage
yf she se any great lynage
Be brought to nought in shameful wyse
And yf a man in honour eyse
Or by his wyt, or by his prowesse
Of that hath she great heuynesse
For trusteth well she goth nye wood
whan any chaunce happeth good
Enuye is of suche cruelte
That sayth ne trouth holdeth she
To frende ne felowe, badde or good
Ne she hath kynne none of her blood
That she nys full her enemy
She nolde, I dare sayne hardely
Her owne father fared wele
And sore abydeth she euery dele
Her malyce, and her male talent
For she is in so great turment
And hate suche, when folke doth good
That nygh she melteth for pure wood
Her herte kerueth and so breaketh
That god the people well awreketh
Enuy ywys shall neuer let
Some blame vpon the folke to set
I trowe that yf Enuy ywys
knewe the best man that is
On this syde or beyonde the see
Yet somwhat lacken hym wolde she
And yf he were so hende and wyse
That she ne myght al abate his pryse
Yet wolde she blame his worthynesse
Or by her wordes make it lesse
I sawe Enuy in that paynting
Had a wonderfull lokyng
For she ne loked but awry
Or ouerwharte, all baggyngly
And she had a foule vsage
She myght loke in no vysage
Of man ne woman, forth ryght playne
But shutte her one eye for disdayne
So for enuy brenned she
whan she myght any man se
That fayre or worthy were, or wyse
Or els stode in folkes pryse
¶ Sorowe was paynted nert Enuy
Upon that wall of masonrye
But well was sene in her colour
That she had lyued in langour
Her semed to haue the yaundice
Not halfe so pale was Auaryce
Ne nothynge lyke of leanesse
For sorowe, thought, and great distresse

That she had suffred daye and nyght
Made her yelowe, and nothyng bryght
Ful fade, pale, and megre also
was neuer wight yet halfe so wo
As that her semed for to be
Nor so fulfylled with yre, as she
I trowe that no wyght myght her plese
Nor do that thyng that myght her ese
Nor she ne-wolde her sorowe slake
Nor comfort none vnto her take
So depe was her wo begon
And eke her hert in angre ronne
A sorowfull thyng wel semed she
Nor she had nothyng slowe be
For to cratchen all her face
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to tere her swyre
As she that was fulfylled of yre
And all to tosse laye eke her heere
About her shulders here and there
As she that had it all to rent
For angre and for male talent
And eke I tell you certaynly
How that she wept full tenderly
In worlde nys wyght so harde of hert
That had sene her sorowes smerte
That nolde haue had of her pytye
So wo begonne a thynge was she
She al to dasht her selfe for wo
And smote togyther her hondes two
To sorowe was she full intentyfe
That wofull recheles caytyfe
Her rought lytle of playeng
Or of clyppynge or kyssynge
For whoso sorowful is in herte
Hym lust not to playe ne sterte
Ne for to daunce, ne to synge
Ne may his hert in temple bringe
To make ioye on euen or morowe
For ioye is contrary vnto sorowe.
Elde was paynted after this
That shorter was a fote twys
Than she was wont in her yonghede
Unneth her selfe she myght stede
So feble and eke so olde was she
That faded was all her beautye
Ful salowe waren her colour
Her heed for hore was whyte as floure.
I wys great qualme ne were it none
Ne syune, although her lyfe were gone
All worn was her body vnweelde
And drye and dwyned al for elde
A foule forwelked thynge was she
That whylom rounde and soft had be
Her eares shoken fast withall
As from her heed they wolde fall
Her face frounced and forpyned
And both her hondes lorne forwyned
So olde she was, that she ne went
A fote, but it were by potent
The tyme that passeth nyght and daye
And restlesse trauayleth aye
And steleth from vs so priuely
That to vs semeth sekerly
That it in one poynt dwelleth euer
And certes it ne resteth neuer
But goth so fast, and passeth aye
That there nys man that thynke may
what tyme that nowe present is
Saueth at these clerkes this
For men thynke it redely
Thre tymes bene passed by
The tyme that maye not sojourne
But goth, and may neuer returne
As water that downe renneth aye
But neuer droppe returne maye
There maye nothynge as tyme endure
Wel all, nor erthly creature
For all thyng it frette and shall
The tyme eke that chaungeth all
And all doth ware, and fostred be
And all thynge destroyeth he
The tyme that eldeth our auncestours
And eldeth kynges and emperours
And that vs all shall ouercomen
Er that deth vs shal haue nomen
The tyme that hath all in welde
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly, that to my wetyng
She myght helpe her selfe nothyng
But turned ayen vnto chyldheed
She had nothyng her selfe to lede
Ne wytte ne pythe in her holde
More than a chylde of two yere olde
But natheles I trowe that she
was fayre sometyme, and fresh to se
whan she was in her ryght full age
But she was past all that passage
And was a doted thyng becomen
A furred cappe on had she nummen
well had she clad her selfe and warme
For colde myght els done her harme
These olde folke haue alwaye colde
Her kynde is suche when they ben olde.

¶ Inother thynge was done there wyth
That ſemed lyke an Ipocryt
Ind it was cleped Pope holy
That lyke is ſhe, that priuely
Ne ſpareth neuer a wycked dede.
whan men of her take none hede
Ind maketh her outwarde precious
wyth pale vyſage and pytous
Ind ſemeth a ſimple creature
But there nys no miſaventure
That ſhe ne thynketh in her corage
Ful lyke to her was thylke ymage
That maked was lyke her ſemblaunce
Shе was ful ſymple of countenaunce
Ind ſhe was clothed and eke ſhod
Is ſhe were for the loue of God
yolden to religion
Such ſemed her deuocion
I pſauter helde ſhe faſt in honde
Ind beſyly ſhe gan to fonde
To make many a ſayntpſayere
To god, and to hys ſayntes dere
Ne ſhe was gaye, freſhe ne iolyſe
But ſemed to be ful ententyſe
To good werkes, and to fayre
Ind therto ſhe had on an hayre
Ne certes ſhe was fatte nothyng
But ſemed wery for faſtyng
Of colour pale and dred was ſhe
From her the gates aye werned be
Of paradyſe, that blyſful place
For ſuch folke maken leane her grace
Is Chriſt ſayeth in hys Euangyle
To gette hem pryſe in towne a whyle
Ind for a lytle glory veigne
They leſen god and eke hys reigne
¶ Ind alderlaſte of euerychone
was paynted Pouert al alone
That nat a peny had in holde
Although ſhe her clothes ſolde
Ind though ſhe ſhulde an honged be
For naked as a worme was ſhe
Ind yf the wether ſtormy were
For colde ſhe myght haue dyed there.
Shе ne had on but a ſtrayte olde ſacke.
Ind many a cloute on it there ſtacke
Thys was her cote, and her mantele
No more was there neuer adele
To cloth her wyth, I vndertake
Great leyſer had ſhe to quake
Ind ſhe was put, that I of talke
Ferre fro theſe other, vp in an halke
There lurked, and there coured ſhe
For poore thyng where ſo it be
Is ſhamefaſte, and diſpiſed aye
Iacurſed may well be that daye
That poore man conceyued is
For god wot al to ſelde iwys
Is any pore man well yfedde
Or well arayed or ycledde
Or well beloued, in ſuch wyſe
In honour, that he maye aryſe.
¶ Al theſe thynges wel auyſed
Is I haue you er thys deuyſed
wyth golde and aſſure ouer all
Depaynted were on the wall
Square was the wall, and hygh ſomdele
Enclоſed, and ybarred wele
In ſtede of hegge, was that gardyn
Come neuer ſhepherde therin
In to that gardyn, wel wrought
who ſo that me coulde haue brought
By ladders, or elſ by degre
It wolde wel haue lyked me
For ſuch ſolace, ſuch ioy, and pley
I trowe that neuer man ne ſey
Is was in that place delicious
The gardyn was not daungerous
To herberowe brydes many one
So ryche a yere was neuer none
Of brydes ſonge, and braunches grene
Therin were brydes mo I wene
Then bene in al the realme of Fraunce
Ful blyſful was the accordaunce
Of ſwete pytous ſonge they made
For al thys worlde it ought glade.
Ind I my ſelfe ſo mery ferde.
whan I her blyſful ſonges herde
That for an hundred pounde wolde I
If that the paſſeage openly
Had be vnto me free
That I nolde entren for to ſe
Thaſſemble, god kepe it fro care
Of brydes, whych therin ware
That ſongen through her mery throtes
Daunces of loue, and mery notes.

whan I thus herde foules ſynge
I fell faſt in a waymentyng
By whych arte, or by what engyn
I myght come in to that gardyn
But way I couthe fynde none
In to that gardayn for to gone
Ne nought wyſt I yf that there were

Eyther hole or place where
By whych I might haue entre
Ne there was none to teache me
For I was al a lone I wys .
For wo and anguyshe of thys
Tyl at laste bethought I me
That by no waye ne myght it be
That there nas ladder ne way to pace
Or hole, in to so fayre a place
Tho gan I go a ful great paas
Enuyron, euen in compas
The closyng of the square wall
Tyl that I founde a wicket small
So shette, that I ne might in gone
And other entre was there none

Upon the dore I gan to smyte
That was fetys, and so lyte
For other way couthe I not seke
Ful longe I chose, and knocked eke
And stode full longe al herkenynge
If that I herde any wyght comynge
Tyl that the dore of thylke entre
A mayden curteys opened me
Her heer was as yelowe of hewe
As any basen scoured newe
Her sclethe tender as is a chycke
with brent browes, smoth and slycke
And by measure large were
The openyng of her eyen clere
Her nose of good proporcion
Her eyen gray, as is a faucon
With swete bieth, and wel sauoured
Her face white, and wel coloured
with lytle mouth and rounde to se
A cloue chynne eke had she
Her necke was of good fassyon
In length and greatnesse by reason
without bleyne, scabbe, or royne
Fro Hierusalem vnto Burgoyne
There nys a fayre necke ywys
To sele howe smoth and softe it is
Her throte also white of hewe
As snowe on braunche snowed newe
Of body ful wel wrought was she
Wen neden not in no countre
A fayrer body for to seke
And of fyne Ortrays had she eke
A chapelet, so semely on
Ne wered neuer mayde vpon
And fayre about that chapelet
A rose garlande had she set

She had a gay mirrour
And wyth a rych golde trefour
Her heed was tressed queyntly
Her sleues sewed fetously
And for to kepe her handes fayre
Of gloues white she had a payre
And she had on a cote of grene
Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene
wel semed by her apparayle
She was not wont to great trauayle
For whan she kempt was fetously
And wel arayed and richly
Than had she done al her iournee
For merry and wel begone was she
She ladde a lusty lyfe in Maye
She had no thought, by nyght ne daye
Of nothyng but yt it were onely
To grayth her wel and vncouthly.

whan that thys dore had opened me
Thys Mayden, semely for to se
I thanked her as I best might
And asked her howe that she hight
And what she was, I asked eke
And she to me was nought wnnecke
Ne of her answere daungerous
But fayre answerde, and sayd thus
Lo sir, my name is ydelnesse
So clepe men me, more and lesse
Ful myghty and ful ryche am I
And that of one thyng namely
For I entende to nothyng
But to my ioye, and my playeng
And for to kembe and tresse me
Iquaynted am I and pryue
wyth myrth, lorde of thys gardyne
That fro the lande of Alexandryne
Made the trees hyther to be sette
That in thys garden bene ysette
And whan the trees were waxen on hyght
Thys wall, that stant here in thy syght
Dyd myrth enclosen al aboute
And these ymages al without
He dyd hem both entayle and peynte
That neyther bene iolyfe ne queynte
But they bene full of sorow and wo
As thou haste sene a whyle ago

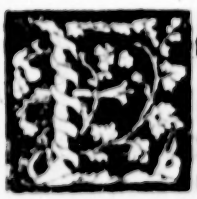
AND ofte tyme hym to solace
Sir myrth commeth in to this place

And

And eke wyth hym cometh his meyne
That lyuen in luſt and ioylyte
And now is myrth therin,to here
The brydes howe they ſyngen clere
The mauys and the nyghtyngale
And other ioly brydes ſmale
And thus he walketh to ſolace
Hym and hys folke,for ſweter place
To playen in,he may not fynde
Although he ſought one in tyl Inde
The aither fayreſt folke to ſe
That in thys worlde may founde be
Hath myrth wyth hym in hys route
That folowen hym alwayes aboute.

Whan ydelneſſe had tolde all thys
And I had herkened wel ywys
Than ſayde I to dame ydelneſſe
Nowe alſo wyſly god me bleſſe
Wyth myrth,that is ſo fayre and fre
Is in thys verde,wyth his meyne
For thyrke aſſemble,yf I may
Shal no man werne me to day
That I thys nyght ne mote it ſe
For wel wene I there wyth him be
I fayre and ioly companye
Fulfylled of al curteſye
And forth without wordes mo
In at the wycket went I tho
That Idelneſſe had opened me
In to that garden fayre to ſe

And whan I was in ywys
myne herte was ful glad of thys
For wel wende I ful ſykerly
Haue bene in paradyſe erthly
So fayre it was,that truſteth well
It ſemed a place eſpirituell
For certes as at my deuyſe
There is no place in paradyſe
So good in for to dwel or be
Is in that garden thought me
For there was many a bryde ſyngyng
Throughout the verde al thryngyng
In many places were nyghtyngales
Alpes,fynches,and wodwales
That in her ſwete ſonge delyten
In thyrke places as they habyten
There might men ſe many flockes
Of turtles and lauerockes
Chalaundres fele ſawe I there
That were nygh forlonged were
And thruſtels,teryns,and mauyſe
That ſongen for to wyne hem pryſe
And eke to ſurmount in her ſonge
That other birdes hem amonge
By note made fayre ſeruiſe
Theſe brydes,that I you deuiſe
They ſonge her ſonge,as fayre and well
As angels done eſpirituell
And truſteth me,whan I hem herde
Ful luſty and well I ferde
For neuer yet ſuch melodye
was herde,of man that myght dye
Such ſwete ſonge was hem amonge
That me thought it no brydes ſonge
But it was wonder lyke to be
Songe of Meremaydens of the ſee
That for her ſyngyng is ſo clere
Though we Meremaydens clepe hem here
In Engilyde,as is our vſaunce
Men clepe hem Sereyns in Fraunce



Nentyſe weren for to
ſynge
Theſe brydes,that not vn-
konnynge
were of her craft,and aprem-
tyſe
But of ſonge ſubtyl and wyſe
And certes,whan I herde her ſonge
And ſawe the grene place amonge
In herte I wext ſo wonder gay
That I was neuer erſt,er that day
So iolyfe,nor ſo wel bygo
Ne mery in herte,as I was tho
And than wyſt I,and ſawe ful well
That ydelneſſe me ſerued well
That me put in ſuch iolyte
Her frende wel ought I for to be
Syth ſhe the doze of that gardyn
Had opened,and me let in.

From hence forth,how that I wrought
I ſhal you tell,as me thought
Fyrſt whereof myrth ſerued there
And eke what folke there wyth hym were
Wythout fable I wyl diſcriue
And of that garden eke as blyue
I wol you tellen after thys
The fayre faſſyon al ywys
That well wrought was for the nones
I may not tel you al atones
But as I may and can,I ſhall

By

By ordre tellen you all.
Ful fayre seruice, and eke ful swete
These byrdes maden as they sete
Layes of love, ful wel sownyng
they songen in her iargonyng
Some hye, and some lowe songe
Upon the braunches grene yspronge
The swetnesse of her melodye
Made al my hert in reuelrye
And whan that I had herde I trowe
These byrdes syngyng on a rowe
Than myght I not wyth holde me
That I ne went in for to se
Her myrth, for my desyryng
was hym to sene ouer all thyng
His countenaunce and hys manere
That syght was to me full dere.



Tho wolt I forth on my ryght hande
Downe by a lytell pathe I founde
Of myntes full, and fenell greene.
And fast by wythouten wene
Her myrth I founde, and ryghte anon
Unto her myrth gan I gon
There as he was hym to solace
And wyth hym in that lusty place
So fayre folke and so freshe had he
That whan I sawe, I woundred me
Fro whence such folke myght come
So fayre they weren all and some
For they were lyke, as to my syght
To angels, that bene fethered bryght
These folke, of whyche I tell you so
Upon a karole wenten tho
A lady karoled hem, that bryght
Gladnesse, blysful and lyght
well couthe she syng and lustely
None halfe so wel and semely
And couth make in songe suche refraynyng
It sate her wonder wel to syng
Her voice ful clere was and ful swete
She was not rude ne vnmete
But couth ynough of such doyng
As longeth vnto karollyng
For she was wont in euery place
To syngen fyrst, folke to solace
For syngyng moost she gaue her to
No craft had she so lefe to do.

Tho myghteste thou karolles sene
And folke daunce and merye bene
And many a fayre turnyng
Upon the grene gras springyng
There myghtest thou se these fluters
Mynstrales and eke iogleurs
That wel to synge dyd her payne
Some songe songes of Loraync
For in Loreyne her notes be
Ful sweeter than in thys countre
There was many a tymbestere
And sautours, that I dare wel swere
Couth her craft ful parfitly
The tymbres vp ful hyghe they
They cast, and hente ful ofte
Upon a fynger fayre and softe
That they layned neuer mo.
Ful fetys damoiseles two
Fyght yonge, and ful of semelyhede
In vyrelis, and none other wede
And fayre tressed euery tresse
Had myrth done for hys noblenesse
Amydde the carole for to daunce
But therof lyeth no remembraunce
Nowe that they daunced queyntly
That one wolde come al prunely
Agayne that other, and when they were
Togyther almoost, they threwe yfere
Her mouthes so, that through her play
It semed as they kyst alway
To daunsen well couthe they the gyse
what shulde I more to you deuyse
Me bode I neuer thence go
whyles that I sawe hem daunce so
Upon the karole wonder faste
I gan beholde, tyl at laste
A lady gan me for to espye
And she was cleped curtesye
The worshypfull, the debonayre
I praye to god euer fal her fayre
Ful curteysly she called me
what do ye there Beau sire (q she)
Come, and yf it lyke you
To daunsen, daunceth wyth vs now
And I wythout taryeng
went in to the carollyng
I was abashed neuer a dele
But it to me lyked ryght wele
That curtesye me cleped so
And bade me on the daunce go

For

for yf I had durst certayne
I wolde haue karoled ryght fayne
As man that was to daunce right blyth
Than gan I loke ofte syth
The shap, the bodyes, and the cheres
The countenaunce and the maneres
Of all the folke that daunced there
And I shall tell what they were.

Ful fayre was myth, ful longe and high
A fayrer man I neuer sigh
As rounde as appel was his face
Full roddy and whyte in euery place
Feyre he was and well besey
With meetely mouthe, and eyen grey
His nose by mesure wrought full ryght
Crispe was his heere, and eke full bryght
His shulders of large brede
And small ythe in the gyrdelstede
He semed lyke a purtreyture
So noble he was of hys stature
So fayre, so toly, and so fetyse
With lymmes wrought at poynt deuyse
Delyuer, smerte, and of great myght
Ne sawe thou neuer man so lyght
Of berde vnneth had he nothyng
For it was in the fyrst spryng
Full ponge he was, and merry of thought
And in samette, wyth bydes wrought
And wyth golde beten full fetously
His bodye was clad full richly
Wrought was hys robe in straunge gyse
And all to slytered for queyntyse
In many a place, lowe and hye
And shode he was with great maystrye
With shone decoped, and wyth lace
By diuty, and by solace
Hys leefe a rosen chapelet
Had made, and on hys heed it set
And were ye who was hys fere
Dame gladnesse there was hym so lefe
That syngeth so well wyth glad corage
That from she was twelue yere of age
She of her loue graunt hym made
But myth her by the fynger hade
Daunsynge, and she hym also
Greate loue was a twixt hem two
Both were they fayre and bryght of hewe
She semed lyke a rose newe
Of colours, and her flesshe so tendre
That wyth a brere smalle and tendre
Men myght it cleue, I dare well sey
Her forheed frounceis al pley
Bent were her browes two
Her eyen gray, and glad also
That laugheden aye in her semblaunt
Fyll of the mouthe by couenaunt
I wot not what of her nose I shal discryue
So fayre hath no woman a lyue
Her heere was yelowe, and clere shynyng
I wot no lady so lykyng
Of frayes freshe, was her garlande
I whiche haue sene a thousande
Sawe neuer ywys no garlande yet
So well wrought of sylke as it
And in an ouergylte sampte
Cladde she was, by greate deyte
Of whiche her leefe a robe werde
The meryer she in her herte ferde
And nert her went, on her other syde
The god of loue, that can deuyde
Loue, and as hym lyketh it be
But he can cherles daunten, hee
And maken folkes pryde fallen
And he can well these lordes thrallen
And ladyes put at lowe degre
Whan he maye hem to proude se.

Thys god of loue of hys fassyoun
Was lyke no knaue, ne quystroun
Hys beautie greatly was to pryse
But of his robe to deuyse
I drede encombred for to be
For not yeladde in sylke was he
But all in floures and flouretes
Ypaynted all wyth amorettes
And wyth losenges and scochons
Wyth bydes, lyberdes, and lyons
And other beastes wrought full wele
Hys garment was euerydele
Ypurtrayed and ywrought wyth flours
By diuers medelynge of colours
Floures there were of many gyse
Yset by compace in a syse
There lacked no floure to my dome
Ne not so muche as floure of brome
Ne byolet, ne eke perwynke
Ne floure none, that men can on thynke
And many a rose lefe full longe
Was entermedled there amonge
And also on hys heed was set
Of roses reed a chapelet
But nyghtyngales a full greate route
That flyen ouer hys heede aboute

The

The leaues felden as they flyen
And he was al with bryddes wrien
with popingay, with nyghtyngale
with chaulaundre, and with wodewale
wyth fynche, with larke, and with archãgel
He semed as he were an angel
That downe were comen fro heuen clere
Loue had wyth hym a bacheliere
That he made alwayes wyth hym be
Swete lokynge, clepyng was he
Thys bacheler stode beholdyng
The daunce, and in hys hande holdyng
Turke bowes two, full wel deuyſed had he
That one of hem was of a tree
That beareth a fruite of sauoure wicke
Ful croked was that foule stycke
And knotty here and there also
And blacke as berry, or any slo
That other bowe was of a plante
without weemme, I dare warrante
Ful euen and by proporcion
Trectes and longe, of ful good saffyon
And it was paynted well and rowhtten
And ouer al diapred and written
wyth ladyes and with bacheleres
Ful lyghtsome and glad of cheres
These bowes two helde swete lokyng
That semed lyke no gadlyng
And ten brode arowes helde he there
Of whych fyue in hys ryghthande were
But they were shauen well and dyght
Notked, and fethered aryght
And al they were wyth golde begon
And stronge poynted euerychon
And sharpe for to kerue wele
But yron was there none ne stele
For al was golde, men myght se
Out take the fethers and the tree.

The swyftest of these arowes fyue
Out of a bowe for to dryue
And best fethered for to flye
And fayrest eke, was cleped beautie
That other arowe, that hurteth lesse
was cleped (as I trowe) Symplesse
the thyrde cleped was Fraunchyse
That fethered was in noble wyse
wyth valour and wyth curtesye
The fourth was cleped companie
That heuy for to shoten is
But who so shoteth ryght ywys
May therwith done great harme and wo
The fyfth of these, and last also
Fayre Semblaunt men that arowe cal
The leest grenous of hem al
yet can it make a full greate wounde
But he maye hope hys sores sounde
That hurt is wyth that arowe ywys
Hys wo the better bestowed is
For he maye soner haue gladnesse
Hys langour ought to be the lesse

Fiue arowes were of other gyse
That bene full foule to deuyse
For shaft and end, forth for to tel
were also black as fend in hel
The fyrst of hem is called pryde
That other arowe next hym besyde
It was cleped vyllanye
That arowe was, as with felonye
Enuenymed, and wyth spitous blame
The thyrde of hem was cleped shame
The fourth wanhope cleped is
The fyfth the newe thought ywys

These arowes that I speke of here
were all fyue on one manere
And all were they resemblable
To hem was wel syttyng and able
The foule croked bowe hydous
That knotty was, and all roynous
That bowe semed wel to shete
These arowes fyue, that bene bounete
And contrarye to that other fyue
But though I tell not as blyue
Of her power, ne of her myght
Hereafter shall I tellen ryght
The soth, and eke signifyaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce
All shall be sayd I undertake
Er of thys boke an ende I make

Nowe come I to my tale agayne
But alderfyrst, I woll you sayne
The fashyon and the countenaunces
Of al the folke that on the daunce is
The god of loue iolyre and lyght
Ladde on his hande a lady dryght
Of hygh prise, and of great degre
Thys lady was called beaute

And

And an arowe, of whych I tolde
Full well thewed was the holde
Ne she was darke ne browne, but bryght
And clere as the moone lyght
Ageyne whome all the sterres semen
But smale candels, as we demen
Her flesshe was tender as dewe of floure
Her chere was symple as bryde in boure
As whyte as lylye or rose in ryse
Her face gentyll and treatyse
Forys she was, and smale to se
No wyntred browes had she
Ne popped her, for it neded nought
To wyndre her, or to paynt her ought
Her tresses yelowe, and longe straughten
Unto her heles downe they raughten
Her nose, her mouth, and eye and cheke
Well wrought, and all the remenaunt eke
A full great fauour and a swote
Me thought in myne herte rote
As helpe me God, when I remembre
Of the fassyon of euery membre
In worlde is none so fayre a wyght
For ronge she was, and hewed bryght
Gote pleasaunt, and fetyse wyth all
Gent, and in her myddell small
Beside Beaute rode Rychesse
And wyght lady of great noblesse
And grent of price in euery place
But who so durst to her trespace
Or vyll her folke in werke or dede
He were full hardy out of drede
For both she helpe and hyndre may
And that is not of yesterday
That ryche folke haue full great myght
To helpe, and eke to greue a wyght
The best and greatest of valoure
Dredden Rychesse full great honoure
And besy weren her to serue
For that they wolde her loue deserue
They cleped her Lady great and small
Thys wyde worlde her dredeth all
Thys worlde is all in her daungere
Her courte hath many a losengere
And many a traytour enuyous
That ben full besy and curious
For to dispraise, and to blame
That best deseruen loue and name
To forne the folke hem to begylen
These losyngeours hem praysle and smylen
And thus the worlde is worde amoynten
But afterwarde they pyll and poynten
The folke, ryght to the bare bone
Behynde her backe when they ben gone
And foule adaten folkes pryse
Full many a worthy man and wyse
Han hyndred, and ydon to dye
These losyngeours wyth her flaterye
And maketh folke full straunge be
There as hem ought ben pryue
Well yuell mote they thryue and thee
And yuell aryued mote they be
These losengeours full of enuye
No good man loueth her companye.

Rychesse a robe of purple on hadde
Ne trowe not that I lye or madde
For in thys worlde is none it lyche
Ne by a thousande dele so ryche
Ne none so fayre, for it full wele
Wyth Orfreys leyde was euerydele
And purtrayde in the tyrannynges
Of dukes stoues, and of kynges
And wyth a bende of golde taffyled
And knoppes fyne of golde amyled
Aboute her necke of gentyll entayle
Was shette the ryche Cheuesayle
In whych there was full great plente
Of stones clere, and fayre to se.
¶ Rychesse a gyrdell had vpon
The bokell of it was of ston
Of vertue great, and mokell of myght
For who so bare the stone so bryght
Of venyme durste hym nothynge dout
Whyle he the stone had hym about
That stone was greatly for to loue
And tyll a ryche mans behoue
Worth all the golde in Rome, and Fryse
The Boudant wrought in noble gyse
Was of a stone full precious
That was so fyne and vertuous
That whole a man it couth make
Of palsye, and of toth ake
And yet the stone had suche a grace
That he was seker in euery place
All thylke daye not blynde to bene
That tastynge myght that stone sene
The barres were of golde full fyne
Upon a tyssue of Satyne
Full heuy, great, and nothynge lyght
In euerych was a besaunt wyght
Upon the tresses of rychesse
was set a cercle for noblesse
Of brende golde, that full lyght shone

So kayre trowe I was neuer none
But he were konnynge for the nones
That coulde deuyse all the stones
That in that cercle shewen clere
It is a wonder thynge to here
For no man coulde prayse or gesse
Of hem the value or rychesse
Rubyes there were, Saphyrs, Ragounces
And Emeraudes, more then two ounces
But all before full subtelly
A fyne Charboncle sette sawe I
The stone so clere was and so bryght
That all so soone as it was nyght
Men myght sene to go forth nere
A myle or two, in length and brede
Such lyght sprange out of the stone
That Rychesse wonder bryght shone
Both her heed, and all her face
And eke aboute her all her place
Dame rychesse on her honde gan lede
A ponge man full of semelyhede
That she best loued of any thynge
Hys lust was moche in houlholdynge
In clothynge was he full fetyse
And loued well to haue hotse of pryse
He wende to haue reproued be
Of theste or murdre, yf that he
Had in hys stable an hackenay
And therfore he desyred aye
To ben acqueynted wyth Rychesse
For all hys purpose, as I gesse
was for to make great dyspence
wythouten warnynge or defence
And Rychesse myght it well sustene
And her dyspences wel mayntene
And hym alwaye suche plentye sende
Of golde and syluer for to spende
wythout lackynge or daungere
As it were pourde in a garnere.

And after on the daunce went
Largesse, that set all her entent
For to ben honorable and free
Of Alexanders kynne was she
Her moste ioye was ywys
when that she yaue, and sayd: haue thys
Not auarice the foule caytyse
was halfe to grype so ententyse
As Largesse is, to yeue and spende
And God alwaye ynowe her sende
So that the more she yaue alwaye
The more ywys she had alwaye
Great loos hath Largesse, and great pryse
For both wyse folke and dotwyse
were wholy to her bandon brought
So well wyth yeftes hath she wrought
And yf she had an enemy
I trowe that she couth craftely
Make hym full sone her frende to be
So large of yeftes, and wyse was she
Therfore she stode in loue and grace
Of ryche and poore in euery place
A full great foole is he ywys
That both ryche and poore, and nygarde is
A lorde maye haue no maner pryce
That greueth more then auarice
For nygarde neuer wyth strength of hande
May wynne hym great lordshyp or lande
For frendes all to fewe hath he
To done hys wyll performed be
And who so woll haue frendes here
He maye not holde hys treasour dere
For by ensample tell I thys
Ryght as an adamant ywys
Can drawen to hym subtelly
The yron, that is layde therby
So draweth folkes hertes ywys
Syluer and golde that yeuen is
Largesse had on a robe freshe
Of ryche purpure Sarzynysshe
well fourmed was her face and clere
And opened had she her colere
For she wyght there had in present
Unto a lady made present
Of a golde broche, full well wrought
And certes it mysstate her nought
For through her smocke wrought wyth sylke
The flesshe was sene as whyte as mylke
Largesse, that worthy was and wyse
Held by the honde a knyght of pryse
was sybbe to Arthour of Bretaygne
And that was he that bare the enseygne
Of worshyp, and the Gouffanoun
And yet he is of suche renoun
That men of hym sayn sayre thynges
Before barons, erles, and kynges
Thys knyght was comen all newly
Fro tourneynge faste by
There had he done great chyualrye
Through hys vertue and hys mayestrye
And for the loue of hys lemman
He caste downe many a doughty man
And nexte hym daunced dame Fraunchyse
Arayed in full noble gyse

She

She nas not browne ne dunne of hewe
But whyte as snowe yfallen newe
Her nose was wrought at poynt deuyse
For it was gentyll and tretyse
With eyen glad, and browes bent
Her heer downe to her heles went
And she was symple as downe on tree
Full debonayre of herte was she
She durst neyther saye ne do
But that, that hyr longeth to
And yf a man were in dystresse
And for her loue in heuynesse
Her herte wolde haue full great pyte
She was so amyable and free
For were a man for her beste adadde
She wolde ben ryght sore adradde
That she dyd ouer great outrage
But she hym holpe hys harme tasswage
Her thought it all a vylanye
And she had on a surkeny
That not of hempe heerdes was
So fayre was none in all Arras
Lorde it was ryddeled fetysly
There nas not a poynt truely
That it nas in hys ryght assyse
Full well yclothed was Fraunchyse
For there nys no cloth sytteth bette
On damoysell, then doth roketте
A woman well more fetyse is
In roketте, then in cote yuys
The whyte roketте ryddeled fayre
Betokeneth that ful debonayre
And swete was she that it bere
By her daunced a Bachelere
I can not tellen you what he hyght
But fayre he was and of good hyght
All had he ben, I saye no more
The lordes sonne of wyndesore.
And next that daunced Curtesye
That praysed was of lowe and hye
For neyther proude ne fole was she
She for to daunce called me
I praye God gyue her good grace
For when I come fyrst into the place
She nas not nyce, ne outrageous
But wyse and ware, and vertuous
Of fayre speche, and fayre answere
was neuer wyght myssayde of here
She bare no rancour to no wyght
Clere browne she was, and therto bryght
Of face and body auenaunt
I wotte no lady so pleasaunt
She were worthy for to bene
In empereſſe or crowned quene.
And by her went a knyght daunceynge
That worthy was and well speakynge
And full well coude he done honour
The knyght was fayre and styffe in stour
And in armure a semely man
And welbeloued of hys lemman.
Fayre Deineſſe then saugh I
That alwaye was me fast by
Of her haue I wythout fayle
Tolde you the shappe and appareyle
For (as I sayd) Lo, that was she
That dyd to me so great bounte
She the gate of that garden
Undyd, and let me passen in
And after daunced as I gesse
And she fulfylled of lustynesse
That nas not yet .xii. yere of age
wyth herte wylde, and thought volage
Nyce she was, but she ne mente
None harme ne sleyght in her entente
But onely lust and iolyte
For yonge folke, well weten ye
Haue lytell thought, but on her playe
Her lemman was besyde alwaye
In suche a gyse that he her kyste
At all tymes that hym lyste
That all the daunce myght it se
They make no force of preuyte
For who so spake of hem yuell or wele
They were ashamed neuer a dele
But men myght sene hem kysse there
As it two yonge doues were
For yonge was thylke bachelere
Of beaute wote I none hys pere
And he was tyght of suche an age
As youth hys lefe, and suche corage
The lusty folke that daunced there
And also other that wyth hem were
That weren all of her meyne
Full hende folke, wyse, and free
And folke of fayre porte truely
There were all comenly
when I had sene the countenaunces
Of hem that ladden thus these daunces
Then had I wyll to gone and se
The garden that so lyked me
And loken on these fayre Laurelles
On Pyne trees, Cedres, and Olmeres
The daunces then ended were
For many of hem that daunced there

where wyth her loues went away
Under the trees to haue her playe.

Alonde they lyued lustely
A Great foole were he sekerly
That nolde hys thikes such lyfe lede
For thys dare I layne out of drede
That who so myght so well fare
For better lyfe durst hym not care
For there nys so good paradyse
As to haue a loue at hys deuyse
Out of that place went I tho
And in that gardyn gan I go
Playenge alonge full merely
The god of Loue full hastely
Unto hym swete lokynge clepte
No lenger wolde he that me kepte
Hys bowe of golde, that shone so bryght
He had hem bent anone ryght
And he full sone sette an ende
And at a brayde he gan it bende
And toke hym of hys arowes fyue
Full sharpe and ready for to dryue
Nowe God that syteth in maieste
Fro deedly woundes he kepe me
yf so be that he had me shete
For yf I wyth hys arowe mete
It had me greued sore ywys
But I that nothynge wyst of thys
Went vp and downe, full many a waye
And he me folowed fast alwaye
But no where wolde I reste me
Tyll I had in all the garden be.

The garden was by measu-
rynge
Ryght euen and square in com-
pasynge
It as longe was as it was large
Of fruyte had euery tre hys charge
But it were any hydous tree
Of whych there were two or thre
There were, and that wote I full wele
Of Pome garnettes a full great dele
That is a frute full well to lyke
Namely to folke when they be syke
And trees there were great foyson
That baren nuttes in her season
Suche as men nutmygges call
That swote of sauour ben wythall
And Almandres great plente
Fygges, and many a date tre
There weren, yf men had nede
Through the gardyn, in length and brede
There was the wexynge many a spyce
As clowe, gylofre, and lycorice
Gyngere, and greyne de Paryse
Canell, and setewale of pryse
And many a spyce delytable
To eaten when men ryse fro table
And many homely trees ther were
That peches, coynes, and apples bere
Medlers, plommes, peeres, chelleynus
Cheryse, of whych many one layne is
Notes, nieys, and boles
That for to sene it was solas
wyth many hygh laurer, and pyne
was renged clene all that gardyne
wyth Cypres, and wyth Olyueris
Of whych that nygh no plenty here is
There were Elmes great and stronge
Waples, asshe, oke, asspe, planes longe
Fyne ewe, popler, and lyndes fayre
And other trees full many a payre
what shulde I tell you more of it?
There were so many trees yet
That I shulde all encombred be
Er I had rekened euery tree
These trees were sette that I deuyse
One from another in assyse
Fyue fadome or syre, I trowe so
But they were hye and great also
And for to kepe out well the sonne
The croppes were so thycke ystonne
And euery braunche in other knytte
And full of grene leues sytte
That sonne myght there none byscende
Lest the tender grasses shende
There myght men Does and Roes yse
And of squyrels full great plente
From bowe to bowe alwaye lepynge
Conies there were also playenge
That comyn out of her clapers
Of sondry colours and maners
And maden many a tournoynge
Upon the fresshe grasse springynge
In places sawe I welles there
In whych there no frogges were
And fayre in shadowe was euery well
But I ne can the nombre tell
Of stremys small that by deuyse
Wyth the bad done come through condyse
Of whych the water in rennynge
Can make a noyse full lykynge

Aboute

Aboute the brynkes of these welles
And by the stremes ouer all elles
Sprange vp the grasse, as thycke yset
And softe as any veluet
On whych men myght hys lemmans ley
As on a fetherbed to ply
For the erthe was full soft and swete
Through moysture of the well wete
Sprongē vp the sote grene gras
As fayre, as thycke, as myster was
But moche amended it the place
That therth was of suche a grace
That it of floures hath plente
That both in somer and wynter be
There sprange the violet al newe
And fresshe perwynke ryche of hewe
And floures yelowe, whyte, and rede
Suche plente grewe there neuer in mede
Full gaye was all the grounde and queynt
And poudred, as men had it peynt
with many a freshe and sondrye floure
That casten vp full good sauoure
I woll not longe holde you in fable
Of all thys garden delectable
I mote my tonge stynten nede
For I ne maye wythouten drede
Naught tellen you the beaute all
Ne halfe the bounte there wyth all
I went on ryght hande and on lefte
Aboute the place, it was not lefte
Evll I had all the garden sene
In the estres that men myght sene
And thus whyle I wente in my playe
The God of loue me folowed aye
Ryght as an hunter can abyde
The beest, evll he seeth hys tyde
To shoten at goodmelle to the dere
when that hym nedeth go no nere
And so befyll, I rested me
Besydes a well vnder a tree
wbych tree in Fraunce men call a Pyne
But syth the tyme of kynge Peppyne
Ne grewe there tree in mannes syght
So fayre, ne so well wore in hyght
In all that varde so hygh was none
And sprynginge in a marble stone
Had nature set, the soth to tell
Under that pyne tree a well
And on the border all wythout
was wrytten in the stone about
Letters small, that sayden thus
Here starfe the fayre Narcisus.

Narcisus was a bachelere
That loue had caught in hys daungere
And in hys nette gan hym so straynē
And dyd hym so to wepe and playne
That nede hym muste hys lyfe forgo
For a fayre lady that hyght Echo
Hym loued ouer any creature
And gan for hym suche payne endure
That on a tyme she hym tolde
That yf he her louen nolde
That her behoued nedes dye
There laye none other remedye
But natheleſſe for hys beaute
So fyers and daungerous was he
That he nolde graunten her askynge
For weppynge ne for fayre prayenge
And when she herde hym werne her so
She had in herte so great wo
And toke it in so great dyspyte
That she wythout more respyte
was deed anone: but ere she deyde
Full pytously to God she prayde
That proude herte Narcisus
That was in loue so daungerous
Myght on a daye ben hampred so
For loue, and bene so hote for wo
That neuer he myght to loye attayne
Then shulde he fele in euery vayne
what sorowe true louers maken
That ben so vylaynously forsaken



Hys prayer was but reasonable
Therfore God held it ferme and stable
For Narcisus shortly to tell
By auenture came to ỹ well
To rest hym in the shadowynge
A daye, when he come from huntinge
Thys Narcisus had suffred paynes
For rennynge all daye in the playnes
And was for thurst in great dystresse
Of herte, and of hys weryneſſe
That had hys wyth almost be nomen
when he was to that well comen:
That shadowed was with braunches grene
He thought of thylke water shene
To drynke, and freshe hym well wythall
And downe on knees he gan to fall
And forth hys nekke and heed out straught
To drynke of that well a draught
And in the water anone was sene

Hys nose, hys mouth, hys eyen bene
And he therof was all abashed
Hys owne shadowe had hym betrashed
For well wende he the fayrne se
Of a chylde of grete beaute
well couth lowe hym wythe tho
Of daunger and of pryde also
That Narcisus somtyme hym bere
He quyte hym well hys guerdon there
For he mused so in the well
That shortly the soth to tell
He loued hys owne shadowe so
That at laste he starfe for woo
For when he sawe that he hys wyll
Wyghte in no maner wayse fulfyll
And that he was so faste caught
That he hym couth comforte naught
He lost hys wyte, eyght in that place
And deyde wythin a lyttell space
And thus hys warysun he tobe
For the lady that he forsoke
Ladyes I praye ensample taketh
Ye that ayenst your loue mystaketh
For yf her death be you to wyte
God can full well your wyle quyte.

When þ thys lettre of whych I tell
Had caught me þ it was þ welle
Of Narcisus in hys beaute
I gan abasshe wythdrawe me
when it fell in me remembraunce
That hym betyde suche myschaunce
But at the last then thought I
That fearfulnesse, full soberly
I myght vnto the welle go
wherof shulde I abashed so
Vnto the welle then went I me
And downe I loutedde to se
The clere water in the stone
And eke the grauell, whych that shone
Downe in the bottome, as syluer fyne
For of the welle, ryght as the fyne
In worlde is none so clere of hewe
The water is euer freshe and newe
That welmeth vp, wyth waues bryght.
The mountenaunce of two fynger hyght
Aboute it is grasse sprynginge
For moyste so tyrche and well lykynge
That it ne maye in no manere dye
No more then maye the se be drye.

Downe at the bottome set sawe I
Two cristall stones craftely
In chylde fresche and fayre well
But o thynge sothly dare I tell
That ye wold holde a great marueyle
when it is tolde, wythouten fayle
For when the sunne clere in syght
Caste in that welle hys bemes bryght
And that the heete dyscended is
Then taketh the cristall stone ywys
Agayne the sonne an hundred hewes
Blewe, yelowe, and reed that freshe & newe is
Yet hath the mercuryons cristall
Suche strength, that the place ouer all
Both fowle and tree, and leues grene
And all the verde in it is sene
And for to done you to vnderstonde
To make ensample well I fonde
Right as a myrrour openly
Sheweth all thynge that standeth therby
As well the colours, as the fygure
wythouten any couerture
Right so the cristall stone shynynge
wythouten any dyscreynynge
The entrees of the verde accuseth
To hym that in the water museth
For euer in whych halfe that ye be
ye maye well halfe the gardyne se
And yf the sunne, he maye sykyr wele
Sene the remnaunt euery dele
For there is none so yerth thynge
So hydde ne closed wyth thynge
That it ne is sene, as thought it were
Depaynted in the cristall there
Thys is the myrrour perelous
In whych the proude Narcisus
Sey all hys fayre face bryght
That made hym fyrst to lye vpryght
For who so loketh in that myrrour
There may nothynge be hys socour
Thoughe he shall there se somthynge
That shall hym lede into longynge.
Full many a worthy man hath it
ybleut, for folde of greatest wyt
Ben soone caught here and mayted
wythouten respyte ben they beyted
Here cometh to folke of newe rage
Here chaungeth many a wyght corage
Here lyeth no rede ne wyte therto
For Venus sonne, dan Cupido
Hath sowen there of loue the sede
That helpe ne lyeth there none, ne rede

So cercleth it the welle aboute
Hys grymes hath he set without
Right for to catche in hys panters
These damoiseis and bacheliers
Loue wyll none other bryde catche
Though he set eyther nette or latche
And for the sede that here was sowen
Thys welle is cleped as well is knowen
The welle of Loue, of very ryght
Of whyche there hath full many a wyght
Spoken in bokes dyuersely
But they shull neuer so verily
Discripcion of the welle here
Ne the the soothe of thys matere
As ye shull, whan I haue endo
The crafte that her belongeth to.

All way me lyked for to dwell
To serne the christall in the well
That shewed me full openly
A thousande thynges faste by
But I may say in soth houre
Stode I to loken or to powre
For sythen I sore syghed
That myrrour hath me nowe entriked
But had I fyrst knowen in my wyt
The vertue and strengthes of it
I nolde not haue mused there
We had bette ben els where
For in the shade I fell anone
That had byreued many one
In thylke myrrour sawe I tho
Amonge a thousande thynges mo
A Roser charged full of roses
That with an hedge aboute enclosed
Tho had I sure lust and enuye
That for Pryes ne for Prayere
Nolde I haue lefte to gone and se
There greatest heape of roses be
Whan I was with thys sage herute
That caught hath many a man and shente
Towarde the Roser gan I go
And whan I was not ferre therfro
The sauour of the roses swote
Me smote right to the herte rote
As I had all enbaumed me
And yf I ne had endouted me
To haue ben hated or assayled
Wy thankes wold I not haue fayled
To pull a rose of all that route
To bere in myne honde aboute
And smellen to it where I went
But euer I dredde me to repent
And leste it greued or forthought
The lorde that thylke gardyn wrought
Of roses there were great wone
So fayre ware neuer in Rone
Of knoppes close, some sawe I there
And some well better woxen were
And some there ben of other moyson
That drowe nygh to her season
And spredde hem faste for to spredе
I loue well suche roses rede
For brode roses, and open also
Ben passed in a day or two
But knoppes wyll freshe be
Two dayes at leest, or els thre
The knoppes greatly lyked me
For fayrer may there no man se
Who so myght haue one of all
It ought hym ben full lefe withall
Wyght I garlonde of hem geten
For no ryches I wolde it leten
Amonges the knoppes I chese one
So fayre, that of the remenaunt none
Ne preyse I halfe so well as it
Whan I auyse in my wyt
For it so well was enlumyned
With colour reed, as well fyned
As nature couthe it make fayre
And it hath leaues wel toure payre
That kynde hath set through hys knowynge
Aboute the redde roses springyng
The stalke was as rythe ryght
And theron stode the knoppe vpright
That it ne bowed vpon no syde
The swote smel sprange so wyde
That it dyed all the place aboute
Whan I had smelled the sauour swote
No wyll had I fro thence yet go
But somdele nere it went I tho
To take it, but myne honde for drede
Ne durste I to the Rose bede
For thystels sharpe of many manners
Nettles, thornes, and hoked brers
For moche they destourbled me
For sore I dradde to harmed be.

The god of loue, with bowe bent
That all day set had hys talent
To pursue and to spyen me
Was stondyng by a sygge tree
And whan he sawe now that I
Had chosen so ententifly

The bothum more vnto my pape
Than any other that I say
He toke an arowe, ful sharply whette
And in hys bowe whan it was sette
He streight vp to hys eere drough
The stronge bowe, that was so tough
And shotte at me so wonder smerte
That through myn eye vnto myn herte
The takel smote, and depe it wente
And therwithal such colde me hente
That vnder clothes warme and softe
Sythen that day I haue chyuered ofte
Whan I was hurte thus in stounde
I fell downe platte vnto the grounde
Myne hert fayled, and faynted aye
And longe tyme in swoune I laye
But whan I came out of swounyng
And had wytte, and my feleyng
I was al mate, and wende full wele
Of bloode haue lorne a full great dele
But certes the arowe that in me stoode
Of me ne drewe no droppe of bloode
For why, I founde my wounde al dry
Than toke I with myn handes twey
The arowe, and full faste it ought pleyght
And in the pullyng sore I syghte
So at the laste the shafte of tree
I drough out, with the fethers thre
But yet the hoked heed ywis
The whyche Beaute called is
Gan so depe in myne herte pace
That I it myght not arace
But in myn hert styll it stoode
All bledde I wel a droppe of bloode
I was bothe anguyshous and trouble
For the peryll that I sawe double
I nyste what to say or do
Ne get a leche my wounde to
For neyther through graffe ne rote
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote
But to the bothum euer mo
Myn herte drewe, for all my wo
My thought was in none other thyng
For had it ben in my keping
It wolde haue brought my lyfe agayne
For certes euenly, I dare wel sayne
The syghte onely, and the fauoure
Alegged moche of my langoure
Than gan I for to drawe me
Towarde the Bothom fayre to se
And loue had get hym in his throwe
Another arowe in to hys bowe
And for to shote gan hym dresse
The arowes name was Symplesse
And whan that Loue gan nygh me nere
He drowe it vp wythouten were
And shotte at me wyth al hys myght
So that thys arowe anon ryght
Throughout eygh as it was rounde
In to myn herte hath made a wounde
Than I anon dyd all my crafte
For to drawen out the shafte
And therwithall I syghed ofte
But in myn herte the heed was lefte
Whyche aye encreced my desyre
Vnto the bothom drowe I nere
And euermo that me was wo
The more desyre had I to go
Vnto the Roser, where that grewe
The freshe bothom, so bright of hewe
Better me were to haue letten be
But it behoued nede me
To don ryght as myne herte badde
For euer the body muste be ladde
After the herte, in woe and wo
Of force togyther they muste go
But neuer this archer wolde fyne
To shote at me wyth all hys pyne
And for to make me to hym mete
The thyrde arowe he gan to shete
Whan best hys tyme he myght espye
The whyche was named Curtesye
In to myne herte it dyd auale
I swoune I fell, bothe deed and pale
Longe tyme I lay, and styred nought
Tyll I abrayde out of my thought
And faste than I auysed me
To drawe out the shafte of tree
But euer the heed was lefte behynde
For aught I myght pull or wynde
So sore it stycked whan I wyte
That by no crafte I myght it flyte
But anguyshous and full of thought
I lefte suche wo, my wounde aye wrought
That somoned me al way to go
Towarde the Rose, that pleased me so
But I ne durste in no manere
Because the archer was so nere
For euermore gladly as I rede
Vyent chylde of fyre hath moche drede
And certes yet for al my peyne
Though that I syghe, yet arowes reyne
And grounde quarels sharpe of steele
Ne for no payne that I might feele

Yet

yet myght I not my selfe with holde
The fayre Roses to beholde
For Loue me yaue suche hardyment
For to fulfyll hys commaundement
Upon my fete I rose vp than
Feble, as a forwounded man
And forthe to gon might I sette
And for the archer nolde I lette
Towarde the Roser faste I drowe
But thornes sharpe, mo than ynowe
There were, and also thystels thicke
And breres brymme for to pricke
That I ne myght get grace
The rought thornes for to pace
To sene the freshe Roses of hewe
I must abyde, thought it me rewe
The hedge about so thycke was
That closed the Roses in compas
But o thyng lyked me right wele
I was so nyghe, I myght fele
Of the bothom the swote odoure
And also se the freshe coloure
And that right greatly lyked me
That I so nere might it se
Suche ioye anon therof had I
That I forgate my maladye
To sene I had suche deliyte
Of sorowe and angre I was all quyte
And of my woundes that I had thore
For no thyng lyken me myght more
Than dwellen by the Roser aye
And thence neuer to passe awaye
But whan a whyle I had be thare
The god of Loue, whyche all to share
Myne herte wyth hys arowes kene
Casteth hym to yeue me woundes grene
He shotte at me full hastely
An arowe named Company
The whyche takell is full able
To make thefe ladyes merciable
Than I anon gan chaungen hewe
For greuaunce of my wounde newe
That I agayne fel in swounyng
And sighed sore in complaynyng
Sore I complayned that my sore
On me gan greuen more and more
I had non hope of allegeaunce
So nygh I drowe to disperaunce
I thought of dethe, ne of lyfe
Whether that loue wolde me dryfe
If me a martyr wolde he make
I might hys power not forsake
And whyle for anger thus I woke
The god of Loue an arowe toke
Ful sharpe it was and pugnaunt
And it was called Fayre semblaunt
The whiche in no wyse wol consent
That any louer hym repente
To serue hys loue, with herte and all
For any peryll that may befall
But though thys arowe was kene grounde
As any rasour that is founde
To cutte and kerue at the poynte
The god of Loue it had anoynte
wyth a precious oyntment
Somdele to yeue alegement
Upon the woundes that he hade
Through the body in my herte made
To helpe her sores, and to cure
And that they may the bette endure
But yet thys arowe, without more
Wade in myne herte a large sore
That in full great payne I abode
But aye the oyntement went abrode
Throughout my woundes large and wyde
It spredde aboute in euery syde
Through whose vertue, and whose myght
Myne herte ioyfull was and lyght
I had ben deed and all to shent
But for the precious oyntment
The shafte I drowe out of the arowe
Rokyng for wo right wonder narowe
But the heed, whiche made me smerte
Lefte behynde in myne herte
wyth other foure, I dare wel say
That neuer woll be take away
But the oyntment halpe me wele
And yet suche sorowe dyd I fele
That al day I chaunged hewe
Of my woundes freshe and newe
As men might se in my vysage
The arowes were so ful of rage
So baryaunt of diuersyte
That men in euerych myght se
Bothe great anoye, and eke swetnesse
And ioye meynt with bytternesse
Nowe were they easy, now were they wood
In hem I felte bothe harme and good
Now: sore without aleggement
Nowe softyng wyth oyntment
It sofined here, and pricketh there
Thus ease and anger togyther were.

The god

The God of Loue delyuerly
Come lepande to me haskely
And sayd to me in great tape
yelde the, for thou may not escape
Way no defence auayle the here
Therfore I rede make no daungere
If thou wolte yelde the haskely
Thou shalt rather haue mercy
He is a foole in syckernesse
That wyth daunger or stoutnesse
Rebelleth, there that he shulde plese
In suche folye is lytell ese
Be meke, where thou muste nedes bowe
To stryue ayen is nought thy prowe
Come atones, and haue ydo
For I woll that it be so
Than yelde the here debonairly
And I answered full humbly
Gladly sir, at your byddyng
I wol me yelde in all thyng
To your seruyce I will me take
For god defende that I shulde make
Ayen your byddyng resystence
I woll not don so great offence
For yf I dyd, it were no skyll
ye may do wyth me what ye wyll
Saue or spyll, and also slo
Fro you in no wyse may I go
My lyfe, my dethe, is in your honde
I may not lasse out of your bonde
Playne at your lyste I yelde me
Hopyng in herte, that somtyme ye
Comforte and ese shull me sende
Or els shortly, this is the ende
Withouten helthe, I mote aye dure
But yf ye take me to your cure
Comforte or helthe, howe shulde I haue
Sythe ye me hurte, but ye me saue
The helthe of loue mote be founde
where as they token fyrst her wounde
And yf ye lyst of me to make
Your prysoner, I woll it take
Of herte and wyll fully at gre
Holy and playne I yelde me
wythout feynyng or feyntyse
To be gouerned by your empryse
Of you I here so moche prise
I woll ben hole at your deuyse
For to fulfyll your lykyng
And repente for nothyng
Hopyng to haue yet in some tyde
Mercy, of that I abyde
And wyth that couenaunt yelde I me
Anone downe kneelyng vpon my knee
Profyrryng for to kysse hys fete
But for nothyng he wolde me lete.

And sayd, I loue the bothe and
prise
Sens that thyn answer doth
me ese
For thou answerest so curtesly
For now I wote wel verely
That thou arte gentyll by thy speche
For though a man ferre wolde seche
He shulde not fynden in certayne
No suche answere of no vilayne
For suche a worde ne myght nought
Isse out of a vilayns thought
Thou shalt not leesen of thy speche
For thy helpyng woll I rede
And eke encrecsen that I maye
But fyrst I woll that thou obaye
Fully for thyne auauntage
Anon to do me here homage
And sythe kysse thou shalte my mouthe
whiche to no vilayne was neuer couthe
For to aproche it, ne for to touche
For lasse of cherles I ne vouche
That they shall neuer nerygh it nere
For curteys, and of fayre manere
well taught, and full of gentrynesse
He muste ben, that shall me kysse
And also of full hygh fraunchyse
That shall attreyne to that empryse
And fyrst of o thyng warne I the
That payne and great aduersyte
He mote endure, and eke trauayle
That shall me serue, without fayle
But there agaynst the to comforte
And wyth thy seruyce to disporte
Thou mayst full glad and ioyfull be
So good a mayster to haue as me
And lorde of so hygh renoun
I beare of loue the Gonfenoun
Of Curtesy the banere
For I am of the selfe manere
Gentyll, curteys, meke, and fre
That who euer entrentyse be
He to honoure, doute, and serue
And also that he hym obserue
Fro trespace and fro vilanye
And hym gouerne in curtesye
wyth wyll and wyth entencion

For whan

For whan he fyrst in my prison
Is caught, than muste he vtterly
Fro thence forthe full besyly
Caste hym gentyll for to be
If he desyre helpe of me
Anon without more delay
without en daunger or affray
I become hys man anone
And gaue hym thankes many a one
And kneled downe wyth hondes toynt
And made it in my porte ful queynt
The love went to my hert rote
whan I had kyssed hys mouthe so swote
I had suche myrthe and suche lykyng
It cured me of langwyshyng
He asked of me than hostages
I nam he sayd taken fele homages
Of one and other, where I haue bene
Pursewed ofte, without en wene
These felons ful of falsyte
Haue many sythes begyled me
And through her falshede her luste acheued
Wherof I repent, and am agreued
And I hem get in my daungere
Her falshede shull they bye full dere
But for I loue the, I say the playne
I woll of the be more certayne
For the so sore I woll nowe bynde
That thou away ne shalt not wynde
For to denyen the couenaunt
Or done that is not auenaunt
That thou were false, it were great ruthe
Sythe thou semest so full of truthe
But, yf the lyst to vnderstande
I merualyle the askyng thys demande
For why or wherfore shulde ye
Hostages or borowes aske of me
Or any other syketernelle
Sythe ye wot in soothfastnesse
That ye me haue suspysed so
And hole myne herte taken me fro
That it woll do for me nothyng
But yf it be at your byddyng
Myne herte is yours, and myn right nought
As it behoueth, in dede and thought
Redy in all to worche your wyll
whether so turne to good or yll
So sore it lusteth you to plese
No man therof may you desese
Ye haue theron sette suche iustyse
That it is werreyed in many wyse
And yf ye doute it nolde obey
Ye may therof do make a key
And holde it wyth you for hostage
Nowe certes thys is none outrage
(Quod loue) and fully I accorde
For of the body he is full lorde
That hath the herte in hys tresore
Outrage it were to asken more.

Than of his aumener he drough
A lytell key fetyse ynough
which was of goldpolished cler
And said to me, wh thiskey here
Thyn hert to me nowe woll I shette
For all my towell loke and knette
I bynde vnder this lytell key
That no wight maye cary awey
This key is full of great poste
wyth whyche anon he touched me
Vnder the syde full softely
That he myne herte sodaynly
wythout anoye hadde spered
That yet right nought it hath me deered
Whan he hadde done his wyll all out
And I had putte hem out of doute
Syr I sayd: I haue right great wyll
Your luste and pleasure to fulfyll
Loke ye my seruyce take at gree
By thylke fayth ye owe to me
I saye nought for reward ne mede
For I nought doute of your seruyce
But the seruaunt trauayleth in vayne
That for to serue dothe hys payne
Vnto that lorde, whyche in no wyse
Conne hym no thanke for hys seruyce.

Loue sayd, dismay the nought
Wyth thou for socour haste me sought
In thake thy seruice wol I take
And high of degree I woll the make
If wyckednesse ne hynder the
But as I hoope it shall nought be
To worthyppe no wyght by auenture
Shall come, but yf he payne endure
Abyde and suffre thy distresse
That hurteth nowe, it shall be lesse
I wotte my selfe what may the saue
What medicyne thou woldest haue
And yf thy trouthe to me thou kepe
I shall vnto thyne helpyng eke
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene
where so they be olde or grene

Thou

Thou shalte be holpen at wordes fewe
For certaynly thou shalte well shewe
Where that thou seruest with good wyll
For to accomplysshen and fulfyll
Thy commaundementes daye and nyght
Whyche I to louers yeue of right.

Ah syr, for goddes loue (sayd I)
Er ye passe hens ententyfely
Your commaundementes to me
ye say
And I shall kepe hem yf I may
For hem to kepen is all my thought
And yf so be I wote hem nought
Than maye I bnwyttingly
Wherfore I praye you entierly
wyth all myne herte, me to lere
That I trespace in no maner
The god of Loue than charged me
Anone, as ye shall here and se
worde by worde, by right empryse
So as the Romaunt shall deuyse
The master leseth hys tyme to lere
whan the disciple will nat here
It is but vayne on hym to swynke
That on hys lernynge will nat thynke
Who so luste loue, lette hym entende
For nowe the Romance begynneth to amende
Nowe is good to here in faye
If any be that canne it saye
And poynt it as the reason is
Sette for other gate ywis
It shall nat well in all thyng
Be brought to good understondyng
For a reder that poynteth yll
A good sentence maye ofte spyl
The boke is good at the endyng
Wade of newe and lusty thyng
For who so will the endyng here
The crafte of loue he shall nowe lere
If that he will so longe abyde
Tyll I thys Romance maye vnfyde
And vndo the sygnifiaunce
Of thys dreme in to Romaunce
The sothfastnesse that nowe is hydde
without couerture shall be kydde
whan I vndone haue thys dremyng
wherin no worde is of leasyng.

Villany at the begynnyng
I will faye loue ouer all thyng
Thou leaue, yf thou wolte be
false, and trespace ayenst me
I curse and blame generally
All hem that louen villany
For villany maketh villeyne
And by hys dedes a chorle is seyne
These villayns arne without pyte
Frendshyp, loue, and all bounte
I nyll receyue vnto my seruyce
Hem that ben villayns of empryse
But vnderstonde in thyne entent
That thys is not myne entendement
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentyll for hys lynages
But who so is vertuous
And in hys porte not outrageous
whan suche one thou seest the before
Though he be not gentyll borne
Thou mayste well seyne thys is in sothe
That he is gentyll, because he dothe
As longeth to a gentyleman
Of hem none other deme I can
For certaynly wit'houten drede
A chorle is demed by hys dede
Of hye or lowe, as ye may se
Or of what kyndrede that he be
Ne say nought for none yuell wyll
Thyng that is to holden styll
It is no worshyp to mussey
Thou mayste enlample take of key
That was somtyme for mussayeng
hated bothe of olde and yonge
As ferre as Gawayn the worthy
was preysed for hys curtesye
Kaye was hated for he was fell
Of worde dispytous and cruell
wherfore be wyse and aqueyntable
Goodly of worde, and resonable
Bothe to lesse and eke to mare
And whan thou comest there men are
Loke that thou haue in custome aye
Fyrst to salue hem yf thou maye
And yf it fall that of hem somme
Salue the fyrst, be not domme
But quyte hem curtesly anon
wythout abydyng, er they gon
For nothyng eke thy tonge applye
To speke wordes of rybaudrye
To villayne speche, in no degre
Late neuer thy lyppe vnbounden be
For I nought holde hym in good faythe
Curteys that foule wordes sayethe
And all women serue and preyse
And to thy power her honour reyse

And yf

And yf that any mysayere
Dispise women, that thou mayst here
Blame him, and byde hym holde him styll
And sette thy myght, and all thy wyll
women and ladyes for to please
And to do thynge that may hem ease
That they euer speke good of the
For so thou mayst best praysed be
Loke fro pryde thou kepe the wele
For thou mayst both perceyue and fele
That pryde is bothe foly and synne
And he that pryde hath him wythin
Ne may hys herte in no wyse
Weken ne souplen to seruyce
For pryde is founde in euery parte
Contrarye vnto loues arte
And he that loueth trewly
Shulde hym conteyne iolyly
wythout pryde in condyte wyse
And hym disgysen in queyntyse
For queynte aray, wythout drede
Is nothyng proude, who taketh hede
For freshe aray, as men may se
wythout pryde may ofte be
Paynteyne thy selfe after thy rent
Of robe and eke of garment
For many syth fayre clothyng
A man amendeth in much thyng
And loke alwaye that they be shape
what garment that thou shalte make
Of hym that can beste do
wythall that parteyneth therto
Poynres and sleues be wel syttande
Right and streyght on the hande
Of shone and bootes, newe and fayre
Loke at the leest thou haue a payre
And that they sytte so fetously
That these rude may vtterly
Wenuayle, syth that they sytte so playne
Howe they come on or of agayne
weare strayte gloues wyth aumere
Of sylke, and alway wyth good chere
Thou gyue, yf thou haue rychesse
And yf thou haue naught spende the lesse
Alwaye be mery, yf thou may
But waste not thy good alway
Haue hatte of floures, as freshe as May
Chapelet of Roses of whytsondaye
For suche araye ne costneth but lyte
Thine handes washe, thy teeth make white
And let no syth vpon the be
Thy nayles blacke, yf thou mayst se
Voyde it awaye delyuerly
And kembe thyne heed eyght iolyly
Farre not thy vysage in no wyse
For that of loue is not themprise
For loue doth hatem, as I fynde
A beaute that cometh nat of kynde
Alwaye in hert I rede the
Glad and mery for to be
And be as ioyfull as thou can
Loue hath no ioye of sorowful man
That yuel is ful of curtesy
That knoweth in hys malady
For euer of loue the sycknesse
Is meynte wyth swete and bytternesse
The sore of loue is maruaylous
For nowe the louer ioyous
Nowe can he playne, nowe can he grone
Nowe can he synge, nowe maken mone
To day he playneth for heuynesse
To morowe he playneth for iolynesse
The lyfe of loue is ful contrarye
Whyche stoundemeale can ofte varye
But yf thou canst myrthes make
That men in gre wol gladly take
Do it goodly, I commaunde the
For men shulde where so euer they be
Do thynge that hem syttynge is
For therof commeth good loos and prys
wherof that thou be vertuous
Ne be not straunge ne daungerous
For yf thou good ryder be
Prycke gladly that men may se
In armes also yf thou conne
Pursue tyl thou a name haste wonne
And yf thy voice be fayre and clere
Thou shalt maken no greate daungere
whan to synge they goodly pray
It is thy worshyp for to abey
Also to you it longeth aye
To harpe and gyterne, daunce and playe
For yf he can wel lote and daunce
It maye hym greatly do auaunce
Amonge eke for thy lady sake
Songes and complaynres that thou make
For that wol meuen in her hete
whan they reden of thy smerte
Loke that no man for scarce the holde
For that may greue the manyfolde
Reson wol that a louer be
In hys gyftes more large and fre
Than chorles that be not of louyng
For who therof can any thyng

He shal be lefe aye for to pene
In londes lore who so wolde leue
For he that through a sodayne syght
Or for a kyssyng anon eyght
yaue hole his herte, in wyl and thought
And to hym selfe kepeth right nought
After this swyfte, it is good reason
He peue his good in abandon.

NOwe woll I here reherse
Of that I haue sayde in verse
All the sentence by and by
In wordes fewe compendously
That thou mayste the better on hem thynke
whether so it be thou wake or wynke
For the wordes lytel greue
A man to kepe, whan it is breue
who so with loue wol gon or ryde
He mote be curteys, and voyde of pryde
Wery, and full of iolyte
And of largesse a loued be.

First I ioyne the here in penaunce
That euer without repentaunce
Thou set thy thought in thy louyng
To last without repentyng
And thynke vpon thy myrthes swete
That shal folowe after whan ye mete.

And for thou trew to loue shalt be
I wyl and comaunde the
That in one place thou set al hole
Thyne hert, without halfen dole
For trechery and sykernesse
For I loued neuer doublenesse
To many his hert that wol depart
Euerych shal haue but lytel parte
But of hym drede I me right nought
That in one place setteth his thought
Therfore in o place it sette
And lette it neuer thens flette
For if thou peuest it in lenyng
I holde it but a wrecched thyng
Therfore peue it hole and quyte
And thou shalt haue the more merytt
If it be lent, than after soone
The bounte and the thanke is done
But in Loue, free peuen thyng
Requireth a great guerdonyng
peue it in yest al quyte fully
And make thy gyfte debonairly
For men that yefte holde more dere
That peuen is with gladsome chere
That gyfte nought to prayse is
That man peueth maugre his
whan thou haste peuen thyne hert (as I
Haue sayd) the here openly
Than auentures shall the fall
whych harde and heuy bene with all
For oft whan thou bethynkest the
Of thy louynge, where so thou be
From folke thou must depart in hye
That none perceyue thy malady
But hyde thyne harme thou must alone
And go forth sole, and make thy mone
Thou shalt no whyle be in o state
But whylom colde and whylom hate
Nowe reed as Rose, now yelowe and fade
Such sorowe I trowe thou neuer hade
Cotidien, ne quarteyne
It is nat so full of peyne
For often tymes it shall fall
In loue, amonge thy payues all
That thou thy selfe al holy
For yeten shalt so bitterly
That many tymes thou shalt be
Styl as an ymage of tree
Dome as a stone, wythout stirryng
Of fote or hande, wythout spekyng
Than sone after al thy payne
To memorye shalt thou come agayne
A man abashed wonder sore
And after sygher more and more
For wyth thou were wythouten were
In such estate ful ofte haue I bene
That haue the yuel of loue assayde
wherthrough thou arte so dismayde

AFter a thought shal take the so
That thy loue is to ferre the fro
Thou shalte saye (God) what mare
That I ne may my lady se (thys be
Myne hert alone is to her go
And I abyde al sole in wo
Departed fro myne owne thought
And with myne eyen se right nought
Alas myne eyen sene I ne may
My carefull hert to conuay
Myne hertes gyde, but they be
I prayse nothyng what euer they se
Shulde they abyde than, nay
But gone and visiten wythout delay
That myne herte desyreth so
For certaynly, but yf they go

I foole

I foole my ſelfe I may wel holde
whan I ne ſe what myne hert wolde
wherfore I wol gone her to ſene
Or raſed ſhal I neuer bene
But I haue ſome tokenyng
Than goſt thou forth wythout dwelling
But oft thou fayleſt of thy deſyre
Er thou mayſt come her any nere
And waſteſt in vayne thy paſſage
Than falleſt thou in a newe rage
For want of ſyght, thou gynneſt mourne
And homewarde penſyfe thou doſt returne
In greate miſchefe than ſhalt thou be
For than agayne ſhall come to the
Eyghes and playntes wyth newe wo
That no ſtrynge pryckyth ſo
who wote it nought, he may go lere
Of hem that byen loue ſo dere
No thyng thyne herte appeſen maye
That ofte thou wolt gone and aſſaye
If thou mayſt ſene by auenture
Thy lyues loye, thyne hertes cure
So that by grace, yf thou myght
Attayne of her to haue a ſyght
Than ſhalt thou done none other dede
But wyth that ſyght thyne eyen fede
That fayre freſhe whan thou mayſt ſe
Thyne herte ſhal ſo rauyſhed be
That neuer thou wolde ſte thy thankes lere
Ne remoue, for to ſe that ſwete
The more thou ſeeſt in ſothfaſtneſſe
The more thou couyteſt of that ſwetneſſe
The more thyne hert brenneth in fyre
The more thyne hert is in deſyre
for who conſyderyth euerydele
It may be lykened wonder wele
The payne of loue vnto a fere
For euermore thou neyghſt nere
Thought, or who ſo that it be
For very ſoth I tel it the
The hotter euer ſhalt thou brenne
As experience ſhal the kenne
Where ſo comeſt in any coſte
who is nert fyre he brenneth moſte
And yet forſoth for al thyne here
Thoughe thou for loue ſwelte and ſwete
Ne for no tyynge thou feien maye
Thou ſhalt not wyllen to paſſe awaye
And though thou go, yet muſt the nede
Thynke al day on her fayre hede
whom thou beheſde wyth ſo good wyll
And holde thy ſelfe begyled yll
That thou ne haddeſt none hardyment
To ſhewe her ought of thyne entent
Thyne hert full ſore thou wolte diſpiſe
And eke repreue of cowardyſe
That thou ſo dull in euery thyng
were dome for drede, wythout ſpekyng
Thou ſhalt eke thynke thou dydeſt folye
That thou were her ſo faſt bye
And durſt not auntre the to ſay
Some thyng, er thou come away
For thou haddeſte no more wonne
To ſpeke of her whan thou begonne
But yet ſhe wolde for thy ſake
In armes goodly the haue take
It ſhuld haue bene more worth to the
Than of treaſour great plente
Thus ſhalte thou mourne & eke cõplayne
And get encheſon to gone agayne
Into thy walke, or to thy place
where thou beheldeſt her fleſhely face
And neuer for falſe ſuſpection
Thou woldeſt fynde occaſion
For thou gone vnto her houſe
So arte thou than deſyrouſe
A ſyght of her for to haue
If thou thyne honour myghteſt ſaue
Or any erande myghteſt make
Thyder, for thy loues ſake
Ful fayne thou woldeſt, but for drede
Thou goeſt not, leeſt that men take hede
wherfore I rede in thy goyng
And alſo in thyne agayne commyng
Thou be wel ware that men ne wyt
Feyne the other cauſe than it
To go that waye, or faſt bye
To heale wel is no folye
And yf ſo be it happe the
That thou thy loue there mayſt ſe
In ſeker wyſe thou her ſalewe
wherwyth thy colour wol tranſmewe
And eke thy bloude ſhall all to quake
Thy hewe eke chaungen for her ſake
But worde and wytte, wyth chere full pale
Shal wante for to tell thy tale
And yf thou mayſt ſo ferforth wynne
That thou reaſon durſt begynne
And woldeſt fayne thre thynges or mo
Thou ſhalt ful ſcarſly fayne the two
Though thou bethynke the neuer ſo wele
Thou ſhalt forgete yet ſomdele

But yf thou deale wyth trecherye
For falle louers mowe all foiye
Saine what the luft woulé dyede
They be fo double in her faithede
For they in herte can thynke o thynge
And fayne another in her fpekynge
And whan thy fpeche is ended all
Ryght thus to the it fhall befall
If any worde than come to mynde
That thou to faye haste lefte behynde
Than thou fhalt bienne in great martyre
For thou fhalt bienne as any fyre
Thys is the ftryfe and ebe the affraye
And the batell that lafteth aye
Thys bargayne ende maye neuer take
But yf that fhe thy peace wyll make
And whan the nyght is comen anon
A thoufande angres fhall come apon
To bedde as faste thou wolte the dyght
where thou fhalt haue but fmall delyght
For whan thou weneft for to flepe
So full of payne fhalte thou crepe
Sterte in thy bedde aboute full wyde
And turne full often on euery fyde
Nowe downwarde groffe, nowe vpright
And walowe in wo the longe nyght
Thyn armes fhalte thou fprede a brede
As man in werre were forwerede
Than fhall the come a remembraunce
Of her fhappe and her femblaunce
wherto none other maye be pere
And wete thou well wythout were
That the fhall fe fomtyme that nyght
That thou haste her, that is fo bryght
Naked betwene thyne armes there
All forthfaftneffe as though it were
Thou fhalte than make caftels in Spayne
And dreme of ioye, al but it bayne
And the delyten of ryght nought
whyle thou fo flombreft in that thought
That fo fwete and delytable
The whyche in foth nys but a fable
For it ne fhall no whyle laste
Than fhalte thou fyghe and wepe faste
And faye dere god, what thynge is this
Why dreme is turned all amys
whyche was ful fwete and apparent
But nowe I wake it is all fhent
Nowe yede thys mery thought away
Twenty tymes vpon a day
I wolde thys thought wolde come agayne
For it alegeth well my payne
It maketh me full of ioyefull thought
It fleeth me that it lafteth nought
Ah lorde, why nyll ye me focoure
The ioye I trowe that I langoure
The deth I wolde me fhulde flo
whyle I lye in her armes two
Wyne harme is harde wythouten were
Wyp great vneafe full ofte I mene

But wolde loue do fo I myght
Haue fully ioye of her fo bryght
Wy payne were quitte me richly
Alas to greate a thynge aske I
It is but folye, and wronge weneng
To aske fo outragious a thyng
And who fo afketh folyly
He mote be warned haftely
And I ne wote what I maye fay
I am fo ferre out of the way
For I wolde haue full great lykyng
And full greate ioye of lafle thyng
For wolde fhe of her gentyneffe
Withouten more me ones kelle
It were to me a greate guerdon
Relefe of al my paffion
But it is harde to come therto
All is but foly that I do
So hygh I haue myne herte fette
where I maye no comforte gette
I wote not where I faye wel or nought
But thys I wote well in my thought
That it were better of her alone
For to flynte my wo and mone
I loke on her I caft goodly
That for to haue all vtterly
Of an other all hole the play
Ah lorde where I fhal byde the day
That euer fhe fhal my lady be
He is full cured, that maye her fe
I god, whan fhall the dawnyng fpringe
To leggen thus is an angry thynge
I haue no ioye thus here to lye
whan that my loue is not me bye
A man to lyen hath great diſeſe
whyche may not flepe, ne reſt in eſe
I wolde it dawed, and were now day
And that the nyght were went away
For were it daye, I wolde vp ryſe
Ah flowe flunne, fhewe thyne empriſe
Spede the to fprede thy beemes bryght
And chace the derkeneſſe of the nyght
To put away the ſtoundes ſtronge

whyche

whych in me lasten al to longe
The nyght shalte thou contynue so
wythout rest, in payne and wo
yf euer thou knewe of loue distresse
Thou shall mowe lerne in that sickenesse
And thus endurynge shalte thou lye
And ryse on morowe vp erly
Out of thy bedde, and harneys the
Er euer dawnyng thou mayst se
Al priuely than shalte thou gone
what whyder it be thy selfe alone
For reyne or hayle, for snowe, for slete
Thyder she dwelleth, that is so swete
The whiche may fall a slepe be
And thynketh but lytle vpon the
Than shalte thou go, ful soule aferde
Loke yf the gate be vnsperde
And wayte wythout in wo and payne
Ful ryght a couilde in wynde and rayne
Than shalt thou go the dore before
If thou mayst fynde any shore
Or hole, or refte, what euer it were
Than shalte thou stoupe, and laye to eere
If ther wythin a slepe be
I meane al saue thy lady free
Whom wakynge yf thou mayst aspye
So put thy selfe in iupardye
To aske grace, and the hymene
That she may wete wythout wene
That thou nyght no reste haste had
So sore for her thou were bestad
women well ought pytie to take
Of hem that sorowen for her sake
And loke for loue of that reuyke
That thou thynke none other lyke
For whan thou hast so great annoy
Shal kysse the er thou go awey
And holde that in ful great deynte
And for that no man shal the se
Before the house ne in the way
Loke thou begone agayne er day
Such commyng, and such goyng
Such heuynesse, and such walkyng
Maketh louers wythouten any wene
Vnder her clothes pale and lene
For loue leaueth coloure ne clennesse
Who loueth trewe hath no fatnesse
Thou shalt well by thy selfe se
That thou must nedes assayed be
For men that shape hem other way
Falsely her ladyes for to betray
It is no wonder though they be satte
wyth false othes her loues they gatte
For ofte I se suche losengeours
Fatter than Abbottes or priours
yet wyth o thynge I the charge
That is to saye, that thou be large
Unto the mayde, that her doth serue
So best her thanke thou shalt deserue
yeue her gyftes, and get her grace
For so thou may thanke purchace
That she the worthy holde and fre
Thy lady, and al that may the se
Also her seruauntes worshyp aye
And please as much as thou maye
Great good through hem maye come to the
Because wyth her they bene yiue
They shal her tell howe they the fande
Curteys and wyse, and wel doande
And she shal preyse wel the more
Loke out of lande, thou be not fore
And yf such cause thou haue, that the
Behoueth to gone out of countre
Leaue hole thyne hert in hostage
Tyl thou agayne make thy passage
Thynke longe to se the swete thyng
That hath thyne herte in her keping
Nowe haue I tolde the, in what wyse
A louer shal do me seruice
Do it than, yf thou wolte haue
The mede, that thou after craue.

When loue al thys had boden me
I sayd hym, sir howe may it be
That louers may in such manere
Endure ꝑ paine ye haue said here
I merualye me wonder sore
Howe any man may lyue or laste
In such payne, and such brennyng
In sorowe and thought, and such syghyng
Aye vnreleased wo to make
whether so it be they slepe or wake
In such anoy continually
As helpe me god this merualye I
Howe man, but he were made of stele
Myght lyue a month, such paynes to fele

The God of loue than sayde me
Frende, by the fayth I owe to the
Nay no man haue good, but he it bye
A man lyueth more tenderlye

The thyng, that he hath bought moste dere
For wete thou well wythout were
In thande that thinge is taken more
For whych a man hath suffred sore
Certes no wo ne may attayne
Unto the sore of louers payne.
Ne one yuell therto ne may amounte
No more than a man counte
The droppes that of the water be
For drye as wel the greate see
Thou myghtest, as the harmes tell
Of hem that wyth loue dwell
In seruice, for peyne hem sleeth
And that eche man wolde flye the deth
And trowe they shulde neuer escape
Nere that hope couthe hem make
Glad as man in prison sete
And may not getten for to ete
But barlye breed, and water pure
And lyeth in vermyn and in ordure
Wyth all thys yet can he lyue
Good hope such comforte hath hym yeue
Whiche maketh wene that he shall be
Delyuered and come to liberte
In fortune is full trust
Though he lye in strawe or dust
In hope is all hys sustaynyng
And so for louers in her wenyng
Which loue hath shytte in hys prisoun
Good hope is her saluatioun
Good hope (howe sore that they smerte)
yeueth hem both wyll and herte
To prefer her bodye to martyre
For hope so sore doth hem desyre
To suffre eche harme that men deuyse
For ioye that afterwarde shall aryse

Both to hem that be in my lace
The fyrste good that maye be founde
To hem that in my lace be bounde
Is swete thought, for to recorde
Thynge wherwyth thou canst accorde
Best in thyne herte, where she be
Thynkyng in absence is good to the
whan any louer doth complayne
And lyueth in distresse, and in payne
Than swete thought shall come as blyue
Awaye hys angre for to dryue
It maketh louers to haue remembraunce
Of comforte, and of hygh pleasaunce
That hope hathe hyght hem for to wynne
For thought anone than shall begynne
As sertes god wotte, as he can fynde
To make a myrrour of hys mynde
For to beholde he wol not lette
Her person he shall afore hym sette
Her laughyng eyen persaunt and clere
Her shappe, her forme, her goodly chere
Her mouth, that is so gracious
So swete, and eke so sauerous
Of all her feyters he shall take hede
Her eyen wyth all her fynnmes fede.

Thus swete thynkynge shall aswage
The paynes of louers, and her rage
Thy loue shall double wythout gruge
whan thou thynkest on her fynelynesse
Or of her laughyng, or of her chere
That to the made thy lady dere
Thys comforte woll I that thou take
And yf the nerte thou woldest forsake
whiche is not lesse sauerous
Thou shuldest not bene to daungerous.

HOpe in desyre catche victorye
In hope of loue is all the glorye
For hope is all ỳ loue maye yeue
Nere hope, there shulde no léger
Blessed be hope, wbych with desyre (lyue
Auaunceth louers in such manyre
Good hope is curteyse for to please
To kepe louers from all disease
Hope keepeth hys lande, and woll abyde
For any peryll that maye betyde
For hope to louers, as moost cheefe
Doth hem endure all mischefe
Hope is her helpe whan myster is
And I shall yeue the eke ywys
Thre other thynges, that greate solace

HE seconde shall be swete speche
That bathe to manye on be leche
To bringe hem oute of wo and were
And helpe manye a bacheler
And many a lady sent succour
That haue loued paramour
Through spekynge, whan they myght here
Of her louers to hem so dere
To me it wordeth that her smerte
The whyche is closed in her herte
In herte it maketh hem glad and lyght
Speche whan they mowe haue syght

And

And therfore now it cōmeth to mynde
In olde dayes as I fynde
That clerkes wryten that her knewe
Ther was a lady freth of hewe
Which of her loue made a songe
On hym for to remembre amonge
In which she sayd whan that I here
Spoken of hym that is so dere
To me it doydeth all smerte
Iwys he sytteth so nere my herte
To speake of hym at eue or morowe
It easeth me of all my sorowe
To me is none so hygh pleasaunce
As of his person dalyaunce
For wyst ful wel that swete speakyng
Comforteth in full moche thynge
Her loue she had full well assayde
Of hym she was full well apayde
To speke of hym her ioye was set
Therfore I rede the that thou get
A frowe that can wel concele
And kepe thy counsayle, and wel hele
To whome go shewe holly thyne hert
Both well and wo ioye and smerte
To get comfort to hym thou go
And priuyly betwene you two
Ye shall speake of that goodly thyng
That hath thyne hert in her kepynge
Of her beautie and her semblaunce
And of her goodly countenaunce
Of al thy state thou shalt hym say
And aske hym counsayle how thou maye
Do any thyng that may her plese
For it to the shall do great ese
That he may wete thou trust hym so
Bothe of thy wele and of thy wo
And yf his het to loue be set
His company is moche the bet
For reson wyll he shewe to the
All utterly his priuitie
And what she is he loueth so
To the playnly he shall undo
Without drede of any shame
Bothe tell her renome and her name
Than shall he farther ferre and nere
And namely to thy lady dere
In syker wyse, yea euery other
Shall helpen as his owne brother
In trouth without doublenesse
And kepen close in sykernesse
For it is noble thynge in fay
To haue a man thou darst say
Thy priuy counsayle euery dele
For that wyll comfort the ryght wele
And thou shalt holde the wel apayed
Whan suche a frende thou hast assayed

The thynde good of greate comforte
That yeueth to louers most disporte
Commeth of syght and beholdynge
That cleped is swete lokyng
The which maye none ese do
Whan thou art ferre thy lady fro
Wherfore thou prese alway to be
In place, where thou mayest her se
For it is thyng moost amerous
Moost delytable and fauerous
For to aswage a mans sorowe
To sene his lady by the morowe
For it is a full noble thynge
Whan thyne eyen haue metynge
With that relyke precyous
Wherof they be so desyrous
But all daye after soth it is
They haue no drede to faren amys
They dreden neyther wynde ne rayne
Ne non other maner payne
For when thyne eyen were thus in blysse
Yet of her curtesye ywys
Alone they can not haue her ioye
But to the hert they conuoye
Parte of her blysse to hym thou sende
Of all his harme to make an ende
The eye is a good messangere
Which can to the hert in suche maniere
Tydynges sende that hath sene
To voyde hym of his paynes clene
Wherof the hert reioyseth so
That a great partye of his wo
Is voyded and put awaye to flyght
Ryght as the darkenesse of the nyght
Is chased with clernesse of the mone
Ryght so is al his wo full soone
Deuoyded clene, whan that the syght
Beholden may that fresh wyght
That the hert desyreth so
That all his darknesse is ago
For than the hert is all at ease
Whan they sene that they hem please
Now haue I declared the all out
Of that thou were in drede and dout

For I haue tolde the faythfully
what the may auen vtterly
And all louers that wol be
Faythfull and full of stabylitie
Good hope alway kepe by thy syde
And swete thought make the abyde
Swete lokyng and swete speche
Of all thyne harmes they shalbe leche
Of euery thou shalt haue great pleasaunce
yf thou canst byde in suffraunce
And serue well without fayntyse
Thou shalt be quyte of thyne empryse
with more guerdoun yf that thou lyue
But all this tyme, this I the geue

THe god of loue whan al the daye
Had taught me as ye haue herde saye
And enfourmed me compendously
He banyshed away all sodaynly
And I alone left all sole
So full of complaynt and of dole
For I sawe noman there me by
My woundes me greued wonderfully
We for to curen nothyng I knewe
Saue the bothom bryght of hewe
wherein was set holly my thought
Of other comfort knewe I nought
But it were through the god of loue
I knewe not ele to my behoue
That myght me ease or comfort gete
But yf he wolde hym entermete
The Roser was withouten dout
Closed with an hedge without
As ye tofore haue herde me sayne
And fast I busyed and wolde fayne
Haue passed the haye, yf I myght
Haue getten in by any sleyght
Unto the bothom so fayre to se
But euer I dradd blamed to be
If men wolde haue suspectioun
That I wolde of ententioun
Haue stole the roses that there were
Therfore to entre I was in fere
But at the last as I bethought
whether I shulde passe or nought
I sawe come with a glad chere
To me a lusty bacheler
Of good stature and of good height
And Bialacoil forsoth he hight
Some he was to curtesy
And he me graunted full gladly
The passage of the bitter hay
And sayde, syr: how that ye maye
Passe yf your wyll be
The fresh Roser for to se
And ye the swete sauour fele
Your warrans may ryght wele
So thou the kepe fro foly
Shal no man do the vylany
yf I may helpe you in ought
I shall not fayne, dredeth nought
For I am bounde to your seruyse
Fully deuoyde of feyntyse
Than vnto Bialacoil sayd I
I thanke you syr full hertely
And your beheste take at gre
That ye so goodly proffer me
To you it cometh of great fraunchyse
That ye me profre your seruyse
Than after full delyuerly
Through the bierrs anon went I
wher enclosed was the haye
I was well pleased, the soth to saye
To se the bothom, fayre and swote
So fresh spronge out of the rote

AND Bialacoil me serued wele
whan I so nygh me myght fele
Of the bothome the swete odour
And so lusty hewed of colour
But than a churle foule hym betyde
Besyde the roses gan hym hyde
To kepe the roses of that Rosere
Of whome the name was Daungere
This churle was hyd there in the greues
Couered with grasse and with leues
To spye and take whom that he fonde
Unto that Roser put an honde
He was not sole for there was mo
For with hym were other two
Of wicked maners, and cursed fame
Than one was cleped by his name
wycked tonge, god yeue hym sorowe
For neyther at eue ne at morowe
He can of no man good speake
On many a iust man doth he wreke
There was a woman ele that hyght
Shame, that who can reken ryght
Trespasse was her fathers name

Her mother reason, and thus shame
Brought of these yike two
And yet had trespasse neuer ado
with reson, ne neuer laye her by
He was so hydous and so vgly
I meane this, that trespasse hyght
But reason conceyueth of a syght
Shame of that I spake afoune
And whan that shame was this borne
It was ordayned that chastitie
Shulde of the Roser lady be
which of the bothoms more and las
with sondrye folke assayled was
That she ne wyst what to do
For Venus her assayleth so
That nyght and day from her she stal
Bothoms and Roses ouer all
To reason than prayeth Chastitie
whom Venus hath flemed ouer the see
That she her doughter wolde her leue
To kepe the Roser fresh and greue
Anon reason to chastitie
Is fully assented that it be
And graunted her at her request
That shame, bycause she is honest
Shal keper of the Roser be
And thus to kepe it there were thre
That none shulde hardy be ne bolde
(were he yonge, or were he olde)
Ageyne her wyll away to bere
Bothoms ne roses that there were
I had well sped had I nat bene
I wayted with these thre and sene
For Bialacoil that was so fayre
So gracious and debonayre
Quytte hym to me full curteisly
And me to please bad that I
Shulde drawe me to the bothom nere
Prese in to touche the rosere
which bare the roses, he yaf me leue
This graunt ne myght, but lytle greue
And for he sawe it lyked me
Right nygh the bothom pulled he
I leafe al greene, and yaue me that
The which full nygh the bothom sat
I made of that leafe ful queynt
And when I feite I was acquaynt
with Bialacoil, and so priue
I wende all at my wyll had be
Than wert I hardy for to tell
To Bialacoil how me befell
Of loue, that toke and wounded me
And sayd, syr so mote I the
I maye no ioye haue in no wyse
Upon no syde, but it tyse
For syth (yf I shall not feyne)
In hert I haue had so great peyne
So great anoy and suche affray
That I ne wot what I shall saye
I drede your wrath to deserue
Leuer me were, that knyues kerue
My body shulde in peces small
Than in any wyse it shulde fall
That ye wrathed shulde ben with me
Saye boldly thy wyll (quod he)
I nyl be wroth yf that I maye
For nought that thou shalt to me saye.



Than sayde I syr, not you displease
To know wen of my greate vncase
In whiche onelye loue hath me brought
For paynes greate, disese, and thought
Fro day to day he doth me dryue
Suppose th not syr, that I lye
In me fyue wounder dyd he make
The sore of which shall neuer slake
But ye the bothom graunt me
which is moost passaunt of beautie
My lyfe my deth, and my martyr
And treasour, that I moost desyre
Than Bialacoil affrayed all
Sayd syr, it may not fall
That ye desyre it maye not aryse
what wolde ye shende me in this wyse
I mokel foole than I were
yf I suffred you away to bere
The fresh bothom, to sayre of syght
For it were neyther skyll ne tyght
Of the Roser ye broke the tynde
Or take the rose afoune his kynde
Ye are not curteys to aske it
Let it styll on the Roser syt
And let it growe tyl it amended be
And parfetly come to beautie
I nolde not that it pulled were
Fro the roser that it bere
To me it is so lefe and dere
with that anon sterte out daunger
Out of the place where he was hydde
His malyce in his chere was kydde
Full great he was and blacke of hewe

Sturdye

Sturdy and hydous, whoso hym knewe
Lyke sharpe vychons his heer was growe
His eyes red sparklyng as the fyre glowe
His nose frounced full hyked stode
He come cryande as he were wood
And sayd, Bialacoil tell me why
Thou bryngest hyther so boldly
Hym that so nygh the rosere
Thou worchest in a wronge manere
He thynketh to dishonour the
Thou art well worthy to haue maugre
To let hym of the Rosere wytte
who seruyth a felon is cuyll quytte
Thou woldest haue done great bountie
And he with shame wolde quyte the
Flye hence felowe I rede the go
It wanteth lytle he wol the slo
For Bialacoil ne knewe the nought
whan the to serue he set his thought
For thou wolt shame hym yf thou myght
Both agayne reason and ryght
I woll nomore in the affye
That comest so slyghly for espye
For it prouyth wonder wele
Thy sleyght and trayson euery dele
I durst nomore make there abode
For the churle he was so wode
So gan he chyet and manace
And through the hay he dyd me chace
For feare of hym I trymbled and quoke
So churlysshly his heed he shoke
And sayd, yf eft he myght me take
I shulde not from his hondes scape
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate
And I all sole disconsolate
was left alone in payne and thought
For shame to death I was nygh brought
Than thought I on my nygh folly
How that my body vtterly
was yeue to payne and to martyre
And therto hadde I so great yre
That I ne durst the hayes passe
There was no hope, there was no grace
I trowe neuer man wyst of payne
But he were laced in loues chayne
Ne no man, and soth it is
But yf he loue, what angre is
Loue holdeth his herte to me ryght wele
whan payne (he sayd) I shulde fele
No hert may thynke, ne tonge sayne
A quarter of my woo and payne
I myght not with the angre last
Myne hert in poynt was for to brast
whan I thought on the rose that so
was through daunger cast me fro
A longe whyle stode I in that state
Tyll that me sawe so mad and mate
The lady of the hygh warde
which from her tower loked thyderwarde

Reason men clepe that lady
which from her tower deliuerly
Come downe to me without more
But she was neyther ponge ne hore
Ne hygh ne lowe, ne fat ne lene
But best, as it were in a mene
Her eyen two were clere and lyght
As any candel, that brenneth bryght
And on her heed she had a crowne
Her semed well an hygh person
For rounde enuyron her crowner
was full of ryche stones fret
Her goodly semblaunt by deuyse
I trowe was made in paradyse
For nature had neuer suche a grace
To forge a worke of suche compasse
For certeyne, but yf the letter lye
God hym selfe, that is so hye
Made her after his ymage
And yaue her sythe suche auauntage
That she hath myght and segnorie
To kepe men from all folly
who so woll trowe her lore
Ne may offenden neuermore

And whyle I stode thus darke and pale
Reason began to me her tale
She sayde: alhayle my swete frende
Fely and chyldhode wyll the shende
which the haue put in great affraye
Thou hast bought dere the tryne of Maye
That made thyne herte merry to be
In cuyll tyme thou wentest to se
The garden wherof ydlenesse
Bare the keye and was maistresse
whan thou yedest in the daunce
with her and had acquayntaunce
Her acquayntaunce is perylous
Fyrst soft, and after noyous
She hath trasshed without wene
The god of loue had the nat sene
Ne had ydlenesse the conueyde
In the verger, where myrth hym pleyde
Yf folye haue supprysed the

Do so that it recouered be
And be welware to take nomore
Counsayle, that greueth after sore
He is wyse, that wyll hym selfe chastyse
And though a yonge man in any wyse
Trespalle amonge, and do folly
Let hym not tary, but hastely
Let hym amende whatso be mys
And eke I counsayle the ywis
The god of loue holly forget
That hath the in suche payne set
And the in hert turmented so
I can not sene how thou must go
Other wayes to garysoun
For daunger, that is so felonn
Felly purposeth the to werrey
Which is full cruell the soth to sey.

AND yet of Daunger commeth no blame
In rewarde of my doughter Shame
which hath ꝑ roses in her ward
Is she that maye be no mussarde
And wycked tonge is with these two
That suffreth no man thyther go
For ell a thyng be do he shal
where that he cometh ouer all
In fourty places yf it be sought
Say thing that neuer was don ne wrought
So moche trayson is in his male
Of falsnesse for to fayne a tale
Thou deiest with angry folke ywys
wherfore to the better is
From these folke awaye to fare
For they wol make the lyue in care
This is the cyrcll that loue they call
Wherin there is but foly all
For loue is folly euery dell
who loueth, in nowyse maye do well
He setteth his though on no good werke
His whole he leseth, yf he be clerke
Or other craft eke, yf that he be
He shall not thryue therin, for he
In loue shall haue more passyoun
Than monke, hermyte, or chanoun
This payne is herde out of mesure
The loue maye eke no whyle endure
And in the possessyoun
Is moche tribulacioun
The loue it is so short lastyng
And but in happe is the gettyng
For I se there many in trauayle
That at last foule fayle
I was nothyng thy counsayler
whan thou were made the homager
Of god of loue to hastely
There was no wysdom but folly
Thyne hert was holy, but not sage
whan thou were brought in suche a rage
To yelde the so redely
And to loue of his great maystry.

DRede the loue awaye to dryue
That maketh the retche not of thy lyue
The folly more fro day to day
Shall growe, but thou it put awaye
Take with thy teeth the brydle fast
To daunt thyne hert, and eke the cast
Yf that thou mayest to get the defence
For to redresse thy fyrst offence
whoso his hert alway wol leue
Shall fynde amonge that shal hym greue.

whan I her herde thus me chastyse
I answered in full angry wyse
I prayed her cesse of her speche
Eyther to chastyse me or teche
To byd me my thought refreyne
which loue hath caught in his demeyne
what wene ye loue woll consent
(That me assayleth with bowe bent)
To drawe myne hert out of his honde
which is so quyckly in his bonde
That ye counsayle may neuer be
For when he fyrst arested me
He toke myne hert so sore hym tyll
That it is nothyng at my wyll
He thought it so hym for to obey
That it spared with a key
I praye you let me be all styll
For ye may well, yf that ye wyll
Your wordes waste in ydlenesse
For vtterly wot houten gesse
Al that ye sayne is but in bayne
We were leuer dye in the payne
Than loue to mewarde shulde arette
Falshed or treson on me sette
I wyll me get pryse or blame
And loue true to saue my name
who that me chasteseth I hym hate

with

with that worde Reson went her gate
whan she sawe for no sermonyng
She myght me fro my foly bryngе
Than dismayed I left all sole
For wery, forwandred as a fole
For I ne knewe no cheryssaunce
Than fell into my remembraunce
How loue bade me to purvey
A felowe, to whom I myght sey
My counsel and my priuytie
For that shulde moche auayle me
with that bethought I me, that I
had a felowe fast by
True and syker, curteys and hende
And he was called by name a frende
A trewer felowe was no where non
In haste to hym I went anon
And to hym all my wo I tolde
From hym right nought I wold witholde
I tolde hym all without were
And made my compleynt on Daungere
Howe for to se he was hydous
And to me warde contrarious
The which through his cruelte
was in poynt to haue meymed me
with Bialacoil whan beme sey
within the garden walke and pley
Fro me he made hym for to go
And I beleft alone in wo
I durst no lenger with hym speke
For daunger sayd he wolde be wreke
whan that he sawe howe I went
The fresh bothom for to hent
Yf I were hardy to come nere
Bytwene the hay and the rosere.

This frend when he wyst of my thought
He discomforted me right nought
But sayd felow, be not so mad
Me so abashed nor bestad
My selfe I knowe full well daungere
And howe he is fers of chere
At prime temps loue to manace
Full oft I haue bene in his case
I felon fyrst though that he be
After thou shalt hym couple se
Of longe passed I knewe hym wele
Ungoodly fyrst though men hym fele
He woll meke after in his bearynge
Ben, for seruyce and obeysynge
I shal the tell what thou shalt do
Hekely I rede thou go hym to
Of herte praye hym specyally
Of thy trespace to haue mercy
And hote hym well here to plese
That thou shalt neuer more hym displese
who can best serue of flatery
Shall please daunger most veterly

My frende hath sayd to me so wele
That he me eased hath somdele
And eke alegged of my turment
For through hym had I hardement
Agayne to daunger for to go
To preue if I myght meke hym so.

TO Daunger came I all ashamed
The whiche alone me had blamed
Desyryng for to pease my woo
But ouer hedge durst I not go
For he forbode me the passage
I founde hym cruell in his rage
And in his honde a great burdowne
To hym I kneled lowe adowne
Full meke of porte, and symple of chere
And sayde syr, I am comen here
Only to aske of you mercy
That greueth me full greatly
That euer my lyfe I wratthed you
But for to amenden I am come now
with all my myght both loude and styl
To done right at your owne wyll
For loue made me for to do
That I haue trespassed hytherto
Fro whom I ne may withdrawe myne
Yet shall I neuer for loye ne smert (herte
(what so befall good or yll)
Offende more agayne your wyll
I euer I haue endure disease
Than do that shulde you displease.

I You requyre, and pray that ye
Of me haue mercy and pytye
To stint your yre, that greueth so
That I wol swerte for euer mo
To be redressed at your lykyng
Yf I trespasse in any thynge
Saue that (I praye the) graunt me
A thyng that may not warned be

That

That I maye loue all onely
None other thynge of you aske I
I shall done all well ywis
yf of your grace ye graunt me this
And ye maye nat letten me
For well wote ye that loue is free
And I shall louen suche that I wyll
who euer lyke it well or yll
And yet ne wolde I for all Fraunce
Do thynge to do you displesaunce.

THan Daungere fyll in hys entent
For to forgeue hys male talent
But all hys wrathe yet at last
He hath released, I prayde so fast
Shortely he sayd thy requeste
Is nat to mokell dishonest
Ne I will nat werne it the
For yet nothynge engreueth me
Forthough thou loue thus euermore
To me is neyther sorte ne sore
Loue where that the lyst, what retcheth me
So ferre fro my Roses be
Trust nat on me for none assaye
In any tyme to passe the haye
This hath he graunted my prayere
Than went I forthe withouten were
Unto my frende and tolde hym all
whyche was right ioyfull of my tale
He sayd nowe gothe well thyne affayre
He shall to the be debonayre
Though he afore was despitous
He shall hereafter be gracious
If he were touched on some good beyne
He shulde yet rewen on thy peyne
Suffre I rede, and no boost make
Fyl thou at good mes mayst hym take
By fayrenesse, and wordes softe
A man maye ouercome ofte
Hym that afore be had in drede
In bokes sothely as I rede
Thus hath my frende with great comforte
Auaunced me wyth hygh disporte
whyche wolde me good, as moche as I
And than anone full sodainly
I toke my leaue, and streight I went
Unto the haye, for great talent
I hadde to sene the freshe bothom
wherin laye my saluatioun
And Daungere to kepe, yf that I
Kepe hym couenaunt trewly
So sore I dradde hys manasyng
I durste nat backe hys byddyng
For lest that I were of hym shent
I brake nat hys commaundement
For to purchase hys good wyll
It was for to come there tyll
Hys mercy was to ferre behynde
I kepte, for I ne myght it fynde
I complayned and sighed sore
And languyshed euermore
For I durst nat ouer go
Unto the Rose I loued so
Throughout my demyng vtterly
That he had knowlege certaynly
Than Loue me ladde in suche a wyse
That in me there was no fentyse
Falsheed, ne no trechery
And yet he full of villany
Of disdayne, and cruelte
On me ne wolde haue pyte
Hys cruel wyll for to refrayne
Tho I wepte alwaye, and me complayne

AND while I was in this tourment
Were come of grace, by god sent
Fraunchyse, and with her Pyte
Fulfylde the Bothom of bounte
They go to Daungere anon ryght
To forther me wyth all her myght
And helpe in worde and in dede
For well they sawe that it was nede
First of her grace dame Fraunchyse
Hath taken of this empryse
She sayd, Daungere great wronge ye do
To wouche this man so moche wo
Oppresen hym so angerly
It is to you great villany
I canne nat se, why ne how
That he hath trespassed agayne you
Saue that he loueth, wherfore ye shulde
The more in cherete of hym holde
The force of loue maketh hym do thys
who wolde hym blame he dyd amys
He leseth more than ye maye do
Hys payne is harde, ye maye se so
And Loue in no wyse wolde consent
That ye haue power to repent
For though that quiche ye wolde hym slo
Fro loue hys herte may nat go
Nowe swete syr, it is your ease
Hym for to angre or displease
Alas, what maye it you auaunce
To done to hym so great greuaunce

what worthyppe is it agayne hym take
Or on your man a werre make
Sithe he so lowly euery wyse,
Is redy,as ye lulle deuyse
If Loue haue caught hym in hys lace
You for to bey in euery caas
And ben youre subiecte at youre wyll
Shulde ye therfore wyllen hym yll
Ye shulde hym spare more all out
Than hym that is bothe proude and stout
Curtesy woll that ye socure
Hem,that ben meke vnder your cure
Hys hert is harde that woll nat meke
What men of mekenesse hym beseke.

THys is certayne,sayd Pyte
we se ofte that humylyte
Bothe yre,and also felony
Venquysheth, and also melancoly
Also stonde forthe in suche bataylle
Thys cruelte and wyckednesse
wherfore I pray you sir Daungere
For to mayntene no lenger here
Suche cruell werre agayne your man
As holly yours as euer he can
Nor that ye worchen no more wo
Vpon thys caytife,that languysheth so
whyche woll no more to you trespace
But put hym holly in your grace
Hys offence ne was but lyte
The god of Loue it was to wyte
That he your thrall so greatly is
And yf ye harme hym ye done amys
For he hath had full harde penaunce
Sythe that ye refte hym thaqueyntaunce
Of Bialacoil,hys moste hope
whyche all hys paynes myght acope
He was before anoyed sore
But than ye doubled hym well more
For he of blysse hath ben full bare
Sythe Bialacoil was fro hym fare
Loue hath to hym great bysynesse
He hath no nede of more busynesse
Voydeth from hym your yre I rede
Ye may not wynnen in thys dede
Maketh Bialacoil repayre agayne
And bauysshe pyte vpon hys payne
For Franchyse woll,and I Pyte
That mercyfull to hym ye be
And sythe that she and I accorde
Haue vpon hym mercy corde
For I you pray,and she mooste
Nought to refusen our requeste
For he is harde,and fell of thought
That for vs two woll do right nought
Daunger ne might no more endure
He meked hym vnto mesure.

IWol in no wyse,sayth Daungere
Pety,that ye haue asked here
It were to great vncurtesye
I woll ye haue the companye
Of Bialacoil,as ye deuyse
I woll hym let in no wyse
To Bialacoil than went in hye
Fraunchyse,and sayde full curtesye
Ye haue to longe be deignous
Vnto thys louer,and daungerous
Fro hym to withdrawe your presence
whyche hath do to hym great offence
That ye not wolde vpon hym se
wherfore a sorowfull man is he
Shape ye to pays hym,and to please
Of my loue yf ye woll haue ease
Fulfyll hys wyll,sythe that ye knowe
Daunger is daunted and brought lowe
Through helpe of me and of Pyte
You dare no more aferde be
I shall do right as ye wyll
Sayth Bialacoil,for it is skyll
Sythe Daunger well that it so be
Than Fraunchyse hath hym sent to me.

BIalacoil at the begynnyng
Salued me in hys comyng
No straungenesse was in him sene
No more thã he me had wasshed bene
As fayre semblaunt than shewed he me
And goodly,as afore he dyd he
And by the honde without dout
Within the hare ryght all about
He ladde me with right good chere
All enuyron the bergere
That Daunger hadde me chased fro
Nowe haue I leaue ouer all to go
Nowe am I raysed at my deuyse
Fro hell vnto paradyse
Thus Bialacoil of gentylnesse
with all hys payne and besynesse
Hath he shewed me onely of grace
The estres of the swote place

I sawe

I ſawe the Roſe whan I was nygh
was greatter woxen, and more high
freſſhe, roddy, and fayre of hewe
Of colour euer yliche newe
And whan I hadde it longe ſene
I ſawe that through the leues grene
The Roſe ſpredde to ſpaunyſhinge
To ſene it was a goodly thynge
But it ne was ſo ſprede on brede
That men within myght knowe the ſede
For it couert was and cloſe
Bothe with the leues and with the roſe
The ſtalke was euen and grene vpright
It was theron a goodly ſyght
And wel the better without wene
For the ſeed was nat ſene
Full fayre it ſpradde the god of bleſſe
For ſuche another, as I geſſe
Ytone ne was ne more dermayle
I was abawed for marueyle
For euer the fayrer that it was
The more I am bounden in loues laas
Longe I abode there ſothe to ſaye
Tyl Bialacoil I ganne to praye
whan that I ſawe him in no wyſe
To me warnen his ſeruyce
That he me wolde graunt a thynge
whiche to remembre is wel ſyttynge
This is to ſayne that of his grace
He wolde me yeue leyſar and ſpace
To me that was ſo deſyrous
To haue a kyſſynge precious
Of the goodly freſſhe Roſe
That ſo ſweetely ſmelleth in my noſe
For if you diſpleaſed nought
I wolde gladly, as I haue ſought
Haue a coſſe therof freely
Of your yeft, for certainly
I wol none haue, but by your leue
So lothe me were you for to greue

HErd frende ſo god me ſpede
Of Chaſtite I haue ſuche drede
Thou ſhuldeſt nat warned be for me
But I dare nat for Chaſtyte
Ageyne her dare I nat myſdo
For alwaye bydeth ſhe me ſo
To yeue no louer leaue to kyſſe
For who therto may wynnen ywiſſe
He of the ſurplus of the playe
May lyke in hoope to gette ſome daye
For who ſo kyſſynge maye attayne
Of loues payne hath (ſothe to ſayne)
The beſt and moſt auenaunt
And erneſt of the remenaunt.

OF hys anſwere I ſighed ſore
I durſt aſſaye him tho no more
I hadde ſuche drede to greue
hym aye
I ná ſhuld nat to moche aſſaye
To chaſe hys frende out of meaſure
Nor putte hys lyfe in auenture
For no man at the fyrſt ſtroke
Ne maye nat fel downe an oke
Nor of the reyſyng haue the wyne
Tyll grapes be rype and well a fyne
Be ſore empreſſed, I you enſure
And drawen out of the preſſure
But I forpeyned wonder ſtronge
Though that I abode right longe
After the kyſſe, in payne and wo
Sythe I to kyſſe deſyred ſo
Tyll that renneynge on my diſtreſſe
There come Venus the goddeſſe
(whyche aye werreyeth Chaſtite)
Came of her grace to ſocour me
whoſe myght is knowe ferre and wyde
For ſhe is mother of Cupyde.

THe God of Loue, blynde as ſtone
That helpeth louers manye one
This lady brought in her right honde
Of brennynge fyre a blaſyng bronde
wherof the flame and hote fyre
Hath many a lady in deſyre
Of Loue brought, and ſore hette
And in her ſeruyce her hert is ſette
Thys lady was of good entayle
Right wonderfull of apparayle
By her atyre ſo bryght and ſhene
Men myght perceyue well and ſene
She was nat of Relygioun
Nor I nyll make mencioun
Nor of robe, nor of treſour
Of broche, neyther of her riche attour
Ne of her gyrdell about her ſyde
For that I nyll nat longe abyde
But knoweth well, that certaynly

She was arrayed richely
Deuoyde of pride certayne she was
To Bialacoil she went a paas
And to hym shortely in a clause
She sayd, sir: what is the cause
ye ben of porte so daungerous
Unto thys louer, and daynous
To graunt hym nothyng but a kysse
To warne it hym ye done amysse
Sythe well ye wotte, howe that he
Is louez seruaunt, as ye maye se
And hath beaute, wherthrough is
worthy of loue to haue the blys
Howe he is semely beholde and se
Howe he is sayre, howe he is free
Howe he is swote, and debonayre
Of age yonge, lusty, and sayre
There is no lady so hawtayne
Duchesse, countesse, ne chastelayne
That I nolde holde her vngoodly
For to refuse hym vtterly
Hys brethe is also good and swete
And eke hys lyppes roddy and mete
Onely to playne, and to kysse
Graunt hym a kysse of gentylnysse
Hys teth arne also whyte and clene
Me thynketh wronge withouten wene
If ye nowe warne hym, trusteth me
To graunt that a kysse haue he
The lasse ye helpe hym that ye haste
And the more tyme shull ye waste
whan the flame of the bery bronde
That Venus brought in her right honde
Hadde Bialacoil with hys hete smete
Anone he badde me withouten lete
Graunt to me the rose kysse
Than of my payne I ganne to lysse
And to the rose anone went I
And kyssed it full fayrly
There nede no man aske, yf I was blythe
whan the sauour sotte and lythe
Stroke to myne hert without more
And me allegged of my sore
So was I full of toye and blysse
Ye is sayre suche a flour to kysse
It was so swote and sauerous
I myght nat be so anguysshous
That I mote gladde and toly be
whan that I remembre me
Yet euer amonge sothly to sayne
I suffre noye and moche payne.

The see may neuer be so styll
That wyth a lytell wynde at wyll
Ouerwhelme and tourne also
As it were woode in wawes go
After the calme the trouble sonne
Wote folowe, and chaunge as the moone
Right so fareth Loue, that syde in one
Holdeth hys ancre, for ryght anone
whan they in ease were best to lyue
They ben wyth tempest all forstryue
who serueth Loue, canne tel of wo
The stoundmele toye mote ouergo
Nowe he hurteth, and nowe he cureth
For syde in o poynte Loue endureth.

Nowe is it rygte me to procede
Howe Shame gan medle and take hede
Through whom sel angres I haue hade
And howe the stronge wall was made
And the castell of bryde and length
That god of Loue wan wyth hys strength
All thys in Romaunce wyll I sette.
And for no thyng me wyll I lette
So that it lykynge to her be
That is the flour of beaute
For she maye best my labour quyte
That I for her loue shall endure
Wycked tonge that the coupne
Of euery louer can deuyne
worste, and addeth more somdele
(For wycked tonge saythe neuer wele)
To me warde bare be ryght great bate
Espronge me ery and late
Tyll he hatde sene the great chere
Of Bialacoil and me yfere
He myght not hys tonge withstonde
worse to reporte than he fonde
He was so full of cursed rage
It satte hym wele of hys lynage
For hym an Irisshe woman bare
Hys tonge was fyled sharpe and square
Poignaunt and ryght keruyng
And wonder better in spekyng
For whan that he me gan espye
He swore (affermyng sykerly)
Betwene Bialacoil and me
was viel aquayntaunce and pryue
He spake therof so folilye

That he

That he awaked Jelousye
whyche all afrayde in hys rysyng
whan that he herde iangiyng
He ran anone as he were wode
To Bialacoil there that he stode
whyche had leuer in thys cause
Haue ben at Reynes or Amyas
For foote hote in hys felonye
To hym thus sayd Jelousye
Why haste thou ben so negligent
To kepen, whan I was absent
Thys berger here left eyn thy warder
To me thou haddest no regarde
To truste to thy confusyon)
Hym thus to whom suspection
I haue ryght great, for it is nede
It is well shewed by the dede
Great faute in the nowe haue I founde
By god anone thou shalt be bounde
And faste locked in a toure
without refuyte or socoure.

FOr Shame to longe hath be the fro
Euer socour she was ago
Whan thou hast lost bothe drede and
seemed well she was nat here (fere
She was besy in no wyse
To kepe the and chastice
And for to helpen Chastite
To kepe the Roser, as thynketh me
For than this boye knaue so boldly
Ne shulde nat haue be hardy
In this berge hadde suche game
whyche nowe me tourneth to great shame.

BIalacoil nyst what to saye
Full fayne he wolde haue fledde
away
For frare haue hydde, nere that he
All sodaynly toke hym wyth me
And whan I sawe he had so
Thys Jelousye take vs two
I was astoned, and knewe no rede
But fledde away for very drede.

THan Shame came forthe ful symply
She wende haue trespaced ful greatly
Bycause of her porte, & made it symple
wearyng a barle in stede of wymple
As nonnes done in her abbey
Because her herte was in affray
She gan to speke wythin a throwe
To Jelousye, right wonder lowe
Fyrst of hys grace she besought
And sayd sir, ne leueth nought
wycked tonge, that false espye
whyche is so glad to fayne and lye
He hath you made, through flatering
On Bialacoil a false leasyng
Hys falsnesse is not nowe a newe
It is to longe that he hym knewe
This is not the fyrst daye
For wycked tonge hath custome aye
Yonge folkes to bewrye
And false lesynges on hem lye.

YEt nevertheless I se amonge
That the loigne it is so longe
Of Bialacoil, herkes to lure
In loues seruyce for to endure
Drawyng suche folke hym to
That he hath nothynge wyth to do
But in sothnesse I trowe nought
That Bialacoil had euer in thought
To do trespace or vilanye
But for hys mother Curtesye
Hathe taught hym euer to be
Good of aqueyntaunce and pryue
For he loueth none heynesse
But mythe and play, and all gladnesse
He hateth all trechours
Soleyne folke and enuyous
For ye weten howe that he
woll euer glade and ioyfull be
Honestly wyth folke to pley
I haue be negligent in good fey
To chastyse hym, therfore nowe I
Of herte I crye you here mercy
That I haue ben so recheles
To tamen hym wythouten lees
Of my foly I me repente
Nowe woll I hole set myne entente
To kepe bothe lowe and styll
Bialacoyl to do youre wyll
Shame Shame (sayde Jelousye)
To be betrasshed great drede haue I
Lecherye hathe clombe so hye
That almoste blered is myne eye
No wonder is, yf that drede haue I
Ouer all reygneth lechery
whose myght groweth nyght and dey
Bothe in cloystre and in abbey
Chastyte is werreyed ouer all

iij Therfore

Therfore I will with ther will
Close bothe roses and rosere
I haue to longe in this manere
Lefte hem vnclosed wylfully
wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorouxull,and repente me
But nowe they shall no lenger be
Unclosed and yet I drede sore
I shall repent ferthermore
For the game goethe all amys
Counsayle I must newe twys
I haue to longe trusted the
But nowe it shall no lenger be
For he may beste in euery coste
Dissceyue,that men trusten moste
I se well that I am nyghe shent
But yf I shette my full entent
Remedye to purueye
wherfore close I shall the wey
Fro hem that will the rose espye
And come to waite me vilonye
For in good faythe and in trouthe
I will not let for no slouthe
To lyue the more in syberuelle
No make anone a fortresse
Than close the roses of good sauour
In mydes shall I make a tour
To put Dialacoll in prison
For euer I drede me of treson
I trowe I shall hym kepe so
That he shall haue no myght to go
Aboute to make companye
To hem that thynke of vilanye
Ne to no suche as hath ben here
Alone,and founde in hym good chere
whyche han allayed hym to shende
And wyth her trowandyse to blende
A foole is eyth to begyle
But may I lyue a lytell whyle
He shall forthynke hys fayre semblaunt.

And with that worde came Drede auaunt
whyche was abashed,and in great fere
whan he wyste Jelousye was there
He was for drede in suche affray
That not a worde durste he saye
But quakyng stode full styll alone
(Tyll Jelousye hys way was gone)
Saue Shame,that hym not forsoke
Bothe Drede and she full sore quoke
That at laste Drede abrayde
And to hys cosyn Shame sayde

Shame(he sayd) in sothfastnesse
To me it is great heuynesse
That the noyse so freee is go
And the sclaunder of vs two
But sythe that it is befall
we may it not agayne call
whan ones spronge is a fame
For many a yere wythouten blame
we haue ben,and many a day
For many an Aprill,and many a May
we hen passed,not shamed
Tyll Jelousye hath vs blamed
Of mystrust and suspection
Causelesse,wythout encheson
Go we to Daunger hastely
And let vs shewe hym openly
That he hath not a right wrought
whan that he set not hys thought
To kepe better the purpose
In hys doyng he is not wyse
he hath to vs do great wronge
That hath suffred nowe so longe
Dialacoll to haue hys wyll
All hys lustes to fulfyll
He muste amende it betterly
Or els shall he dyamouisly
Exiled be out of thys londe
For he the werre may not withstonde
Of Jelousye,nor the greue
Sythe Dialacoll is at mischefe.

To Daunger Shame & Drede anon
The right way ben gon
The thryfe they foud be alone
Lygging vnder an hawethorne
Under hys heed no pylowe was
But in the stede a trusse of gras
He stombred,and a nappe he toke
Tyll Shame pitously hym shoke
And great manace on hym gan make
Why slepest thou,whan thou shuld wake
(Quod Shame) thou doest vs vilanye
who trusteth the,he dothe folye
To kepe roses or bothoms
whan they ben fayre in her sesons
Thou arte worse to famylierre
where thou shulde be straunge of chere
Stoute of thy porte,redy to greue
Thou doest great folye for to leue
Dialacoll here inne to call
The ponder man,to shenden vs all

Though

Though that thou slepe, we maye here
Of Jelousye great noyse here
Arte thou nowe late, ryse vp an hye
And stoppe sone and delyuerly
All the gappes of the hay
Do no sauoure, I the pray
It falleth nothynge to thy name
To make fayre semblant, where thou mayst (blame.

If Dialacoil be swete and free
Dogged and fell thou shuldest be
Frowarde and outragious ywys
I chose chasteth that curtyse is
Thys haue I herde ofte in sayenge
That man may for no dauntynge
Make a sperhauke of a bolarde
All men woll holde the for musarde
That debonayre haue founden the
It sytteth the nought curteys to be
To do men pleasaunce or seruyse
In the it is recreaundyse
Let thy werkes ferre and nere
Be lyke thy name, whych is Daungere
Then all abawed in shewynge
Anone spake Drede, ryght thus sayenge
And sayd, Daungyr I drede me
That thou ne wolte besy be
To kepe that thou hast to kepe
when thou shuldest wake, thou arte a slepe
Thou shalt be greued certaynly
yf the alyye Jelousye
Or yf he fynde the in blame
He hath to daye allayed shame
And chased away, wyth great manace
Dialacoil out of thys place
And sweareth shortly that he shall
Enclose hym in a sturdy wall
And all is for thy wyckednesse
For that he sayleth straungenesse
Thyne herte I trowe be sayled all
Thou shalt repent in speciall
yf Jelousye the sothe knewe
Thou shalt forthynke, and sore rewe.

Wyth ȳ the churle his clubbe gan shake
Frownynge hys eyen gan to make
And hydous chere, as man in rage
For yre he brent in hys vysage
when that he herde hym blamed so
He sayd out of my wytte I go
To be dyscomfyte I haue great wronge
Certes I haue nowe lyued to longe
Syth I maye not thys closer kepe
All quycke I woll be doluen depe
yf any man shall more repayre
Into thys gardyn for foule or fayre
Myne herte for yre gothe a fere
That I lette any enter here
I haue do folly nowe I se
But nowe it shall amended be
who setteth fote here any more
Truly he shall repent it sore
For no man more into thys place
Of me to entre shall haue grace
Euer I had wyth swerdes twayne
Throughout myne herte, in euery payne
Perced to be, wyth many a wounde
Then slouth shulde in me be founde
From hence forth by nyght or daye
I shall defende it yf I maye
wythouten any exception
Of eche maner condicion
And yf I it any man graunt
Holdeth me for recreaunt.

Then Daūger on hys fete gan stande
And hente a burden in his hande
wyth in hys yre ne left he nought
But through the berger he hath sought
yf he myght fynde hole or trace
where through that me mote forth by pace
Or any gappe, he dyd it close
That no man myght touche a rose
Of the Roser all aboute
He shytteth euery man wythoute
Thus daye by daye Daunger is wers
More wonderfull and more dyuers
And fyller ehe, then euer he was
For hym full ofte I synge alas
For I ne maye nought, through hys yre
Recouer that I most desyre
Myne herte alas, woll brast a two
For Dialacoil I wrathed so
For certaynly in euery membre
I quake, when I remembre
Of the bothom, whych I wolde
Full ofte a daye sene and beholde
And when I thynke vpon the kysse
And howe moche ioye and blysse
I had through the sauour swete
For wante of it I grone and grete
Me thynketh I fele yet in my nose
The swete sauour of the rose
And nowe I wote that I mote go

So ferre the freshe floures fro
To me full welcome were the dethe
Silence therof (alas) me slethe
For whyplom wyth thys rose, alas
I touched nose, mouth, and face
But nowe the death I muste abyde
But Loue consent an other tyde
That ones I touche maye and kysse
I trowe my payne shall neuer lysse
Theron is all my couetyse
whych vexeth myne herte in many wyse
Nowe shall repayre agayne sygkynge
Longe watche on nyghtes, and no slepynge
Thought in wyshynge, turment, and wo
wyth many a turnynge to and fro
That halfe my payne I can not tell
For I am fallen into hell
From paradyse and welth, the more
Wy turment greueth more, and more
Anoyeth nowe the bytternesse
That I to fore haue felte swetnesse
And wycked tonge, through hys falshede
Causeth all me wo and drede
On me he leyeth a pytous charge
Because hys tonge was to large.

NOwe it is tyme shortly that I
Tell you somthynge of Jelousy
That was in great suspection
Aboute hym selfe he no mason
That stone coulde laye me quertour
He hyred hem to make a tour
And fyrst the roses for to kepe
Aboute hem made he a dyche depe
Right wonder large, and also brode
Upon the whych also stode
Of squared stone, a sturdy wall
vohych on a cragge was founded all
And right great thyckenesse eke it bare
Aboute it was founded square
An hundred fadome on euery syde
It was all lych longe and wyde
Lest any tyme it were assayled
Full well about it was batayled:
And rounde enuyron eke were sette
Full many a tyche and fayre tourette
At euery corner of thys wall
was set a toure full principall
And euetyche had wythoute fable
A portcolyse defensable
To kepe of enemyes, and to greue
That there her force wolde preue
And eke amydde thys purpryse
was made a toure of great mayestryse
A fayrer saugh no man wyth syght
Large and wyde, and of great myght
They dread none assaut
Of gynne, gonne, nor shaffaut
The temprure of the mortere
was made of lyenure wonder dere
Of quycke lyme perfaunt and egre
The whych was tempred wyth vynegre
The stone was harde of adamant
wherof they made the foundement
The toure was rounde made in compas
In all thys worlde no rycher was
Ne better ordayned there wythall
Aboute the toure was made a wal
So that betwyxt that and the toure
Roses were sette of swete sauoure
wyth many roses that they bere
And eke wythin the castell were
Espryngoldes, gonnes, bowes, and arbers
And eke about at corners
Men seyne ouer the wall stonde
Great engyns, who were nere honde
And in the kernels here and there
Of arblasters great plentye were
None armure myght her stroke wythstonde
It were folye to preace to honde
wythout the dyche were lystes made
wyth wall bataryed large and brade
For men and horse sholde not attayne
To nygh the dyche ouer the playne
Thus Jelousye hath enuyron
Sette aboute hys garnyson
wyth walles rounde, and dyche depe
Onely the Roser for to kepe
And Daunger erly and late
The keyes kepe of the vtter gate
The whych openeth towarde the est
And he had wyth hym at lest
Thurty seruauntes echeone by name
That other gate kepte by name
whych opened, as it was couthe
Towarde the parte of the southe
Sergeauntes assygned were her to
Full many, her wyll for to do
Then Drede had in her bayllye
The keppynge of the constablerye
Towarde the north I vnderstonde
That opened vpon the lyfte honde
The whych for nothynge may be sure
But yf she do busy cure

Erly

Ecly on morowe, and also late
Strongly to shette and barre the gate
Of euery thynge that she may se
Drede is aferde, where so she be
For wyth a puffe of lyteil wynde
Drede is astonyed in her mynde
Therfore for stealynge of the Rose
I rede her not the yate vnclose
A foules flyght woll make her fle
And eke a shadowe yf she it se.

Thyn wycked tonge ful of enuye
wyth soudyours of Normandye
Is he that casteth all the bate
was keper of the fourth gate
And also to the torber tyze
he went full ofte for to se
when hys lotte was to wake a nyght
hys instrumentes wolde he dyght
For to blowe and make sowne
After then he hath enchesoune
And walken ofte vpon the wall
Corners and wyckettes ouer all
Full narowe serchen and espye
Though he nought fonde, yet wolde he lye
Dyscordaunt euer fro armonye
And destoned from melodye
Controue he wolde and soule fayle
wyth bornepypes of Cornewayle
In stowres made he discordaunce
And in hys musyke wyth myschaunce
He wolde seyne wyth notes newe
That he fonde no woman trewe
Ne that he sawe neuer in hys lyfe
Vnto her husbonde a trewe wyfe
Ne none so full of honeste
That she nyll laugge and mery be
when that she herith or maye espye
I may speaken of lecherye
Euerychc of hem hath some vyce
One is dyshoneste another is nyce
Yf one be full of dyllaunye
Another hath a lyklerous eye
Yf one be full of wantonnesse
Another is a chyderesse.

Thus wycked tonge, God yeue hym shame
Can put hem euerychone in blame
wythout deserte and causelesse
he lyeth, though they ben gyltelesse
I haue pyte to sene the sorowe
That walketh both eue and morowe
To innocentes doth suche greuaunce
I praye God yeue hym yuell chaunce
That he euer so besye is
Of any woman to seyne amys
Eke Jelousye, God confounde
That hath made a toure so rounde
And made aboute a garyson
To sette Bealacoil in pryson
The whych is shette there in the tour
Full longe to holde there soiour
There for to lyue in penaunce
And for to do hym more greuaunce
whyche hath ordeyned Jelousye
In olde decke for to espye
The maner of hys gouernaunce
The whych dyuell in her enfaunce
Had lerned of louers arte
And of hys pleys toke her parte
She was except in hys seruyse
She knewe eche wrenche and euery gyse
Of Loue, and euery wyle
It was harde her to begyle
Of Bealacoil she toke ayc hede
That euer he lyueth in wo and drede
He kept hym kene, and eke pryue
Lest in hym she had se
Any foly countenaunce
For she knewe all the olde daunce
And after thys when Jelousye
Had Bealacoil in hys bayllye
And shette hym vp that was so fre
For sure of hym he wolde be
He trusteth sore in hys castell
The stronge werke hym lyketh well
He dr rode not that no glotons
Sholde steale hys roses or bothoms
The roses weren assured all
Defenced wyth the stronge wall
Nowe Jelousye full well maye be
Of drede demorde in lyberte
whether that he slepe or wake
For of hys roses maye none be take.

But Jalas nowe mourne shall
Because I was wythout the wall
Full moche dole and mone I made
who had wyst what wo I hadde
I trowe he wolde haue had pyte
Loue to dere had solde me
The good that of hys loue had I

I went about it all quyetly
But nowe through doublynge of my payne
I se he wolde it sell agayne
And me a newe bargayne lere
The whych all out the more is dere
For the solace that I haue lorne
Then I had it neuer aforne
Certayne I am full lyke in dede
To hym that cast in earth hys sede
And hath ioye of the newe spryngе
when it greneth in the gynnynge
And is also layre and freshe of floure
Lusty to sene, swote of odoure
But er he it in sheues shere
Maye fall a wether that shall it dere
And make it to fade and fall
The stalke, the greyne, and floures all
That to the tyllers is forbode
The hope that he had to sene
I drede certayne that so fare I
For hope and trauayle sykerly
Ben me byralte all wyth a storme
The floure nyll seden of my corne
For Loue hath so atamed me
when I began my pryuyte
To Balacoil all for to tell
whome I ne founde frowarde ne fell
But toke agree all hole my playe
But loue is of so harde assaye
That all at ones he reued me
when I wende best abouen to haue be
It is of loue, as of fortune
That chaungeth ofte, and nyll contune
Wyych whylom woll on folke symple
And glombe on hem another whyle
Nowe frende nowe foe shalt her sele
For a twynclynge tourneth her whele
She can wrythe her heed awaye
Thys is the concourse of her playe
She can areyse that doth mourne
And whirle adowne and ouertourne
who serueth hyghest, but as her lust
A foole is he that woll her trust
For it is I that am come downe
Through charge and reuolutioun
Syth Bialacoil mote fro my twyne
Shytte in the prison ronde wythinne
Hys absence at myne herte I fele
For all my ioye and all myne hele
was in hym, and in the Rose
That but you woll, wyych hym doth close
Open, that I maye hym se
Loue woll not that I cured be
Of the paynes that I endure
Nor of my cruell auenture

Ah, Bialacoil myne owne dere
Though thou be nowe a prisoner
Kepe at leest thyne herte to me
And suffre not that it dampned be
Ne let not Ielousye in hys rage
Putten thyne herte in no seruage
All though he chastyce the wythout
And make thy body buto hym lout
Haue herte as harde as diamaunt
Stedfast, and naught pleyaunt
In prison though thy body be
At large kepe thyne herte free
A trewe herte woll not plye
For no manace that it maye dye
If Ielousye doth the payne
Quyte hym hys whyle thus agayne
To bringe the at leest in thought
Yf other waye thou mayst nought
And in thys wyse sykerly
worche, and wynne the maystry
But yet I am in great affraye
Lest thou do not, as I saye
I drede thou canst me great maugre
That thou emprysoned arte for me
But that not for my trespas
For through me neuer dyscouered was
Yet thynge, that ought by secrete
Well more annoye is in me
Then is in the of thys myschaunce
For I endure more harde penaunce
Then any can sayne or thynke
That for the sorowe almost I synke
when I remembre me of my wo
Full nyghe out of my wytte I go.
Inwarde myne herte I sore drede
For comfortelesse the death I drede
Owe I not well to haue dystresse
when falsse, through her wyckednesse
And traytours, that arne enuyous
To noyen me, be so corragious
Ah, Bialacoil full well I se
That they hem shape to dyscreue the
To make the buxome to her lawe
And wyth her corde the to drawe
where so hem lust, ryght at her wyll
I drede they haue the brought there tyll
wythout comforte, thought me slethe
Thys game woll bringe me to my dethe

For

For yf I your good wyll lese
I more be deed I maye not chese
And yf that thou forȝete me
Myne herte shall neuer in lykynge be
Nor elswhere fynde solace
yf I be put out of your grace
As it shall neuer ben I hope
Then shulde I fall in wanhope
Alas, in wanhope: naye parde
For I woll neuer dyspeyred be
yf hope me fayle, then am I
Ungracious and unworthy
In hope I woll conforted be
For Loue, when he betaught her me
Hard, that hope where so I go
Shulde aye be relees to my wo
But what and she my bales bete
And be to me curteys and swete
She is in nothynge full certayne
Louers she put in full great payne
And maketh hem wyth wo to dele
Her fayre behest dyscryueth fele
For she woll behote sykerly
And faylen after utterly
Ah, that is a full noyous thynge
For many a louer in louynge
Hangeth upon her, and trusteth fast
whych lese her trauayle at the last
Of thyng to cómen she wote ryght nought
Therfore yf it be wysely sought
Her counsayle foly is to take
For many tymes, when she woll make
A full good sylogysme, I drede
That afterwarde there shall in dede
Folowe an yuell conclusyoun
This put me in confusioun
For many tymes I haue it sene
That many haue begyled bene
For truste that they haue set in hope
whych fell hem afterwarde a flope

But nathelesse yet gladlyer she
wolde
That he that woll hym wyth
her holde
Had altymes her purpost clere
wythout dyscreyte or any were
That she desyreth sykerly
when I her blamed I dyd foly
But what auayleth her good wyll
when she ne may staunche my stounde yll
That helpeth lytell that she may do
Outtake behest unto my wo
And heest certayne in no wyse
wythout yefte is not to prayse.

When heest and dede a sondre
vary
They done a great contrary
Thus am I posted vp and
downe
wyth doole, thought, and confusyoun
Of my dysease there is no nombre
Daungere and shame me encombre
Drede also, and Jelousye
And wycked Tonge full of enuye
Of whych the sharpe and cruel Ire
Full ofte me put in great martyre
They haue my ioye fully lette
Syth Bialacoil they haue bethette
Fro me in pryson wyckedly
whome I loue so entierly
That it woll my bane be
But I the sooner maye hym se
And yet more ouer woll of all
There is set to kepe, foule her befall
A Rympled becke ferce roune in rage
Frownynge and yelowe in her vysage
whych in awarte lyeth daye and nyght
That none of hem maye haue a syght.

Nowe mote my fortwn enforced be
Full soth it is that Loue vaf me
Thre wonder yeftes of hys grace
whych I haue lorne now in thys place
Syth they ne may wythout drede
Helpen but lytell who taketh hede
For here auayleth no Swete thought
And Swete Speche helpeth ryght nought
The thyrde was called Swete Lokynge
That nowe is lorne wythout lesynge.

Yeftes were fayre, but not for thy
They helpe me but symply
But Bialacoil loosed be
To gone at large, and to be free
For hym my lyfe lyeth all in doute
But yf he come the rather oute
Alas I trowe it woll not bene
For howe shulde I euermore hym kene
He maye not out, and that is wronge
Bycause the Toure is so stronge
Howe shulde he out, or by whose prowesse
Of so stronge a fortresse:
By me certayne it nyll be do

God

God wotte I haue no wytte therto
But well I wote I was in rage
when I to Loue dyd homage
who was in cause (in sothfastnesse)
But her selfe dame Idelnesse
wherby me conueyd through fayre prayere
To entre in to that fayre vergere
She was to blame me to leue
The wherby nowe both me sore greue
A fooles worde is nought to trowe
Ne worthe an apple for to lowe
Wenne shulde hym shybbe bytterly
At prime temps of hys foly
I was a foole, and she me leued
Through who I am eyght nought releued
She accomplyshed all my wyll
That nowe me greueth wonder yll.

REason me layd what shulde fall
I foole my selfe I maye well call
That loue alyde I had not layde
And trowed that dame Reason layde
Reason had both skyll and eyght
when she me blamed, wyth all her myght
To meble of loue, that hath me shent
But certayne nowe I woll repent.

ANd shulde I repente, nay parde
I falle traytour, then shulde I be
The dyuels engyns wolde me take
yf I my loue wolde forsake
Or Bialacoil falsly betraye
Shulde I at myschefe hate hym, naye
Syth he nowe for hys curtesye
Is in pryson of Jelousye
Curtesye certayne dyd he me
So mocche, that it maye not polden be
when he the bay passen me lete
To kysse the Rose, fayre and swete
Shulde I therfore con hym maugre
Naye certaynly, it shall not be
For Loue shall neuer yeue good wyll
Here of me, through worde or wyll
Offence or complaynt more or lesse
Neyther of Hope nor Idelnesse
For certes it were wronge that I
Hated hem for her curtesye
There is not elis, but suffre and thynke
And waken when I shulde wynke
Hyde in hope, tyll Loue through chaunce
Sende me socour or allegeaunce
Expectant aye tyll I maye mete
To getten mercy of that swete.

WHylom I thynke howe Loue to me
Sayd he wolde take at gre
My seruyce, yf impacience
Caused me to done offence
He layd, in chambe I shall it take
And hygh mayster ete the make
yf wrecchednesse ne reue it the
But loue I trowe that shall not be
These were hys wordes by and by
It semed he loued me truely
Nowe is there not but serue hym wele
yf that I thynke hys thanke to fele
My good myne hertne Jyeth hole in me
In loue maye no defaute be
For trewe loue ne fayled neuer man
Soothly the faute more nedes than
As God forbyd, be founde in me
And how it cometh, I can not se
Nowe let it gone as it maye go
whether Loue woll socoure me or slo
He may do hole on me hys wyll
I am so sore bounde hym tyll
From hys seruyce I maye not flene
For yse and drath wythouten wene
Is in hys hande, I maye not chese
He maye me do both wynne and lese
And syth so sore he doth me greue
Yet yf my lyste he wolde acheue
To Bialacoil goodly to be
I yeue no force what fell on me
For though I dye, as I more nede
I praye Loue of hys goodlyhede
To Bialacoil do gentylnesse
For whome I lyue in suche dystresse
That I more dyen for penaunce
But fyrst, wythout repentaunce
I woll me confesse in good entent
And make in hast my testament
As louers done that feien sincere
To Bialacoil leaue I myne herte
All hole, wythout departynge
Or doublenesse of repentynge

¶ Cõment Raison vient a Lamant.

Then

THus as I made my passage
In complaynt and in cruell rage
And I not where to fynde a leche
That couthe vnto myne helpynge eche
Sodaynly agayne comen doune
Out of her tour I sawe Reasoun
Discrete and wyse, and full pleasaunt
And of her port full auenaunt
The ryght waye she toke to me
which stode in great perplexite
That was posshed in euery syde
That I nyst where I myght abyde
Tyll she demurely sad of chere
Sayd to me as she came nere
Fryne owne frende, art thou greued
How is this quarel yet atcheued
Of loues syde anon tell me
Hast thou not yet of loue thy fyll
Art thou nat wery of thy seruyce
That the hath in suche wyse
what loye hast thou in thy louynge
Is it swete or bytter thynge
Canst thou yet chese, let me se
what best thy socour myght be.

THou seruest a full noble lorde
That maketh the thrall for thy rewarde
which aye returneth thy turment
with foly so he hath the blent
Thou fell in myschefe thylke daye
whan thou dyddest, the sothe to saye
Obeysaunce and the homage
Thou wroughtest nothyng as the sage
whan thou became his liege man
Thou dyddest a great foly than
Thou wystest nat what fell therto
with what lorde thou hadst to do
Yf thou haddest hym well knowe
Thou hadst nought be brought so lowe
For yf thou wystest what it were
Thou woldest serue hym halfe a yere
Nat a weke, nor halfe a daye
Ne yet an houre without delaye
Neuer I loued paramours
His lordshyp is so full of shours
Knowest hym ought.
Lamaunt. Yea dame pardye
Reasoun. Nay nay Lamaunt. Yes I
Reasoun. wherfore let se
Lamaunt. Of that he sayd I shulde be
Glad to haue suche lorde (as he)
And master of suche seignorie
Reasoun. knowest hym nomore
Lamaunt. Nay certes I
Saue that ye yafe me rules there
And went his way, I nyst where
And I abode bounde in balaunce
Lo, there a noble conysaunce.

¶ Reasoun.

BVt I woll that thou knowe hym nowe
Synnynge and ende, syth that thou
Arte so angryshous and mate
Disfigured out of astate
There maye no wretche haue more of wo
Ne caytyfe none enduren so
It were to euery man sytting
Of his lorde haue knowledgyng
For yf thou knewe hym out of doubt
Lyghtly thou shuldest escapen out
Of thy pryson that marreth the
Lamaunt. Ye dame syth my lorde is he
And I his man made with myne honde
I wolde ryght fayne vnderstonde
To knowe of what kynde he be.
Yf any wolde enforme me.

¶ Reasoun

IE wolde (sayde reason) the lere
Syth thou to lerne hast suche de
And shewe the thoute fable fere
A thyng ỳ is not demonstrable
Thou shalt withouten science
And knowe withouten experience
The thyng that may not knowen be
Ne wyst ne shewed in no degree
Thou mayst the soth of it nat wytten
Though in the it were wrytten
Thou shalt not knowe therof more
whyle thou art ruled by his lore
But vnto hym that loue woll flye
The knotte maye vnclosed be
which hath to the, as it is founde
So longe to knytte, and not vnbounde
Now sette well thyne entencioun
To here of loue descripcioun.

Loue it is an hatefull pees
A free acquaintaunce without reles
And through the fret full of falshede
A sycknesse all set in drede
In herte is a dispayring hope
And full of hope it is wanhope
wyse woodnesse, and boyde Reason
A swete peryl in to drowne
An heuy burthen lyght to beare
A wicked bawe away to weare
It is Carybdes perylous
Disagreable and gratious
It is discordaunce that can accorde
And accordaunce to discorde
It is comyng without science
wysedome without sapience
without discretioun
Bauoyre without possessyoun
It is lyke hele and hole sycknesse
A trust drowned and dronkenesse
And helthe ful of maladye
And charyte ful of enuye
And angre ful of habundaunce
And a gredye sufficiaunce
Delyte right ful of heuynesse
And dreried ful of gladnesse
Bytter swet nesse and swete errour
Right wel sauoured good sauour
Hem that pardou hath within
And pardon spotted without synne
A payne also it is ioyous
And felony ryght pytious
Also playe that selde is stable
And stedfast ryght inconstable
A strength weyked to stande vpryght
And febleneesse full of myght
wytte vnaduysed, sage folly
And ioye full of tourmentrye
A laughter it is weping aye
Rest that trauayleth nyght and daye
Also a swete hell it is
And a sorowfull paradys
A plesaunt gayle and pytouus
And full of frost somer season
Eyrene temps full of frostes whyte
And Maye deuoyde of all delyte
with sere braunches blossoms engrene
And newe frute fylled with wynter tene
It is a flowe maye not forbeare
Ragges rybaned with golde to weare
For all so well woll loue be sette
Under tagges as ryche rochette
And eke as wel by amorettes
In mournyng blacke, as bryght burnettes
For none is of so mokel pryse
Ne noman founden so wyse
Ne none so hygh is of parage
Ne noman founde of wyt so sage
No man so hardye ne so wyght
Ne no man of so mokell myght
None so fulfylled of bountie
That he with loue maye daynted be
All the worlde holdeth this waye
Loue maketh all to gone myswaye
But it be they of euyll lyfe
whome Genius curseth man and wyfe
That wrongly werke agayne nature
None suche I loue, ne haue no cure
Of suche as loue seruauntes bene
And woll not by my counsayle stene
For I ne preyse that louynge
wherthrough men at the last endyng
Shall call hem wretches full of wo
Loue greueth hem and shendeth so
But yf thou wolt well loue eschewe
For to escape out of his mewe
And make all hole thy sorowe to slake
No better counsayle mayst thou take
Than thynke to flee well yiwys
Maye nought helpe eis, for wyt thou this
yf thou flye it, it shall flye the
Folowe it, and folowen shall it the

Clamaunt.

whan I had herde al Reason sayne
which had spyrit her speche in bayne
Dame (sayde I) I dare well saye
Of this auaunt me well I maye
That from your schole so deuaunt
I am, that neuer the more auaunt
Ryght nought am I through your doctrine
I dull vnder your discipyne
I wot nomore than wyst euer
To me so contrary and so fer
Is euery thynge that ye me lere
And yet I can it al by parteere
My hert forgetteth therof ryght nought
It is so wryten in my thought
And depe grauen it is so tender
That all myne hert I can it render
And rede it ouer communely
But to my selfe leudest am I

But



Wt ſyth ye loue diſceyuen ſo
And lacke and preiſe it bothe two
Deſyneth it into this letter
That I maye thynke on it the better
for I herde neuer deſyned here
And wyllfully I wolde it lere
yf loue be ſtatched well and ſought
It is a ſyknelle of the thought
Innered and kned bytwyxt tweyne
with male and female with o cheyne
So freely that bynderh, that they ne twynne
whether ſo therof they leſe or wynne
The rote ſpryngeth through hote brennyng
Into diſordinate deſyryng
for to kyſſen and embrace
And at her luſt them to ſolace
Of other thynge loue retcheth nought
But ſetteth her hert and all her thought
More for delectatioun
Than any procreatioun
Of other frute by engendrure
which loue to god is nat pleaſure
for of her body frute to get
They reue no force, they are ſo ſet
Upon delyte to play in fere
And ſome haue alſo this manere
To layenen hem for loue ſeke
Suche loue I prayſe not at a leke
for paramours they do but layne
To loue truly they diſdayne
They fallen ladyes traytourſly
And ſweren hem othes vtterly
with many a leſyng, & many a fable
And all they fynden diſceyuable
And whan they han her luſt getten
The hote ernes they all forveten
women the harme byen full ſore
But men this thynken euermore
That laſſe harme is ſo mote I the
Diſceyue them, than diſceyued be
And namely where they ne may
fynde none other meane way
for I wot well in ſothfaſtneſſe
That who doeth nowe his buſyneſſe
with any woman for to dele
for any luſt that he may fele
But yf it be ſo for engendrure
He doth treſpaſſe I you enſure
for he ſhulde letten all his wyll
To getten a lykely thyng hym tyll
And to ſuſtayne yf he myght
And kepe forth by kyndes ryght
His owne lykeneſſe and ſemblable
for bycauſe all is corruptable
And fayle ſhulde ſucceſſyoun
Ne were they generatioun
Our ſeetes ſterne for to ſaue
whan father or mother arne in graue
Her chyldren ſhulde, whan they ben dede
Full diligent bene in her ſtede
To dle that warke on ſuche a wyſe
That one may through another ryſe
Therfore ſet kynde therin delyte
for men therin ſhulde haue delyte
And of that dede be not erke
But oft ſythens haunt that werke
for none wolde draw ther of a draught
Ne were delyte which hath hym caught
This had ſubtyl dame Nature
for none goth ryght I the enſure
Ne hath entent hole ne perfyte
for her deſyre is for delyte
The which forfened creaſe, and eke
The playe of loue for oft ſeke
And thrall hem ſelfe they be ſo nyſe
Unto the prince of euery vyce
for of eche ſynne it is the rote
Unleſull luſt though it be ſote
And of all euyll the racyne
As Tullius can determyne
which in his tyme was full ſage
In a boke he made of age
where that more he prayſeth elde
Though he be croked and vnweldy
And more of cómendatioun
Than youth in his deſcriptioun
for youth ſet both man and wyfe
In all paryll of ſoule and lyfe
And pareil is, but men haue grace
The paryll of youth for to pace
without any deth or diſtreſſe
It is ſo full of wyldneſſe
So oft it doth ſhame or domage
To hym or to his lynage
And ledeth man now vp nowe downe
In moſell diſſolutioun
And maketh hym loue well company
And led his lyfe diſtruely
And halte hym payde with none eſtate
within hym ſelfe is ſuche debate
He chaungeth purpoſe and entent
And falte into ſome couent

To lyuen after her empryse
And leseth fredom and fraunchyse
That nature in hym had sette
The whiche agayne he may not gette
yf he there make his mansyon
For to abyde prokellyon
Though for a tyme his hert absent
It maye not fayle he shall repent
And eke abyde thylke daye
To leaue his habyte, and gone his waye
And leseth his worthyp and his name
And dare not come agayne for shame
But all his lyfe he doth so mourne
Bycause he dare not home retourne
Fredom of kynde so lost hath he
That neuer may recured be
But that yf god hym graunt grace
That he may or he hence pace
Contryne vnder obedience
Through the vertue of patience
For youth set man in all folye
In vnthryft and in rybaudrye
In lechery and in outrage
So oft it chaungeth of corage
Youth grymeth oft suche bargayne
That may not ende without payne
In great paryll is set youth hede
Delyte so doth his brydell lede
Delyte this hangeth, drede the nought
Both mans body and his thought
Onely through youthes chambere
That to done euyll is customere
And of naught els taketh hede
But onely folkes for to lede
In to dispoite and wyldernesse
So is froward from sadnesse
But elde draweth hem therfro
who wote it not, he may wel go
And mo of hem, that nowe arne olde
That whylom youthe had in holde
whiche yet remembreth of tender age
Howe it hem brought in many arage
And many a folly therin wrought
But now ꝑ elde hath hym through sought
They repent hem of her follye
That youth hem put in leopardye
In paryll and in mochе wo
And made hem oft amysse to do
And sewen euyll companye
Ryot and auoutryce.

Yet elde can agayne restrayne
From suche folly, and refrayne
And set men by her ordynaunce
In good rule and in gouernaunce
But euyll she spendeth her seruyse
For noman woll her loue neyther preyse
She is hated, this wote I wele
Her acquayntaunce wolde no man fele
Ne han of elde company
Men hate to be of her aye
For no man wolde become olde
Ne dye whan he is yonge and bolde
And elde maruayleth ryght greatly
whan they remembre hem inwardly
Of many a perylous empryse
which that they wrought in sondry wyse
How euer they myght without blame
Escape aware without shame
In youth without domage
Or repryse of her lynage
Losse of membre, shedyng of bloude
Parell of deth, or losse of good
woste thou not where youth abyt
That men so preysen in her wyt
with delyte the halte soiour
For both they dwellen in o tour
As longe as youth is in season
They dwell in one mansyon
Delyte of youth woll haue seruyce
To do what so he woll deuyse
And youth is redy euermore
For to obeye for smerte of sore
Vnto delyte, and hym to serue
Her seruyce, whyle that she maye lyue.

Where elde habyte, I wol the tell
Shortly, and no whyle dwel
For thither behoueth ꝑ to go
yf deth in youth the not slo
Of this iourneye thou mayst not fayle
with her labour and trauayle
Lodged ben with sorowe and wo
That neuer out of her courte go
Payne and distresse, sykenesse and yre
And melancoly that angry syre
Bene of her paleys senatours
Gronyng and grutchynge her harbegeours
The daye and nyght her to tourment
with cruell deth they her present
And tellen her ecliche and late
That deth standeth armed at her gate

Than

Than bringe they to her remembraunce
The folly dedes of her enfaunce
which causen her to mourne in wo
That youth hath her begyled so
which sodayuly away is hasted
She weyeth the tyme that she hath wasted
Complayning of the preterytte
And the present, that nat abytte
And of her olde vanitie
That but afore her she maye se
In the future some socour
To leggen her of her dolour
To graunt her tyme of repentaunce
For her synnes to do penaunce
And at the last so her gouerne
To wynne the ioye that is eterne
Fro which go bakwarde youth he made
In vanitie to drowne and wade
For present tyme abyderh nought
It is more swyft than any thought
So lytle whyle it doth endure
That there nys compte ne measure
But how that euer the game go
who lyst to loue, ioy and myrth also
Of loue, be it he or she
Hye or lowe who it be
In trute they shulde hem delyte
Her parte they may not els quyte
To saue hem selfe in honestie
And yet full many one I se
Of women, sothly for to sayne
That delyte, and wolde fayne
The playe of loue, they be so wylde
And not couevte to go with chylde
And yf with chylde they be perchaunce
They wol it holde a great mischaunce
But what so euer wo they feie
They woll not playne, but conceie
But yf it be any foole or nyce
In whome that shame hath no iustyce
For to delyte echone they drawe
That haunt this worke both hye and lawe
Saue suche that arne worth right nought
That for moneye woll be bought
Suche loue I prayse in no wyse
whan it is gyuen for couetyse
I preyse no woman, though so be woode
That yeueth her selfe for any good
For lytle shulde a man tell
Of her that wyl her body sell
Be she mayde, be she wyfe
That quycke wyll sell her by her lyfe
How fayre there that euer she make
He is a wretche I vndertake
That loued suche one, for swete or soure
Though she hym called her paramoure
And laugheth on him, and maketh him feest
For certaynly no suche beest
To be loued is not worthy
Or beare the name of duury
Non shulde her please, but he were woode
That woll dispoyle hym of his good
Yet natheielle I woll not saye
That she for solace and for playe
Haye a iewell or other thyng
Take of her louers free yeuyng
But that she aske it in no wyse
For drede of shame, or couetyse
And she of hers may hym certayne
without slaunder yeuen agayne
And ioyne her hertes togyther so
In loue, and take and yeue also
Trowe not that I woll hem twynne
whan in her loue there is no synne
I woll that they togyther go
And don all that they han ado
As curteys shulde and debonayre
And in her loue beren hem fayre
without byte both he and she
So that alwaye in honestie
Fro folly loue to kepe hem clere
That brenneth hertes with his fere
And that her loue in any wyse
Be deuoyde of couetyse
Good loue shulde engendred be
Of true hert, iust and secree
And not of suche as set her thought
To haue her lust, or els nought
So are they caught in loues lace
Truly for bodily solace
Fleshly delyte is so present
with the, that set all thyne entent
without more what shuld I glose
For to get and haue the rose
which maketh the so mate and wood
That thou delyrest none other good
But thou art not an yuche the nerere
But euer abydest in sorowe and werre
As in thy face it is to sene
It maketh the both pale and lene
Thy myght, thy vertue goth awaye
A sory gest in good faye
Thou harborest in thyne Inne

The god of loue whan thou let in
Wherfore I rede thou shet hym out
Or he shall greue the out of dout
For to thy profyte it wyll turne
Yf he nomore with the soiourne
In great myschefe and sorowe sonken
Ben hertes that of loue arne dronken
As thou peraduenture knowen shall
whan thou hast lost the tyme all
And spent by thought in ydlenelle
In waste, and wofull lustynelle
Yf thou mayst lyue the tyme to se
Of loue for to delyuered be
Thy tyme thou shalt bewepe sore
The which neuer thou mayest restore
For tyme lost, as men may se
For nothyng may recouered be
And yf thou scape, yet at last
Fro loue that hath the so fast
Knytte and bounden in his lace
Certayne I holde it but a grace
For many one as it is seyne
Haue lost and spent also in veyne
In his seruyce without socour
Body and soule, good and treasour
wytte and strength, and eke rychelle
Of which they had neuer redyelle.

¶ Lamant.

Hus taught and preached hath Reason
But loue spyrite her sermon
That was so imped in my thought
That her doctryne I set at nought
And yet ne sayd she neuer a dele
That I ne vnderstode it wele
worde by worde the mater all
But vnto loue I was so thral
which calleth ouer all his playe
He chaseth so my thought aye
And holdeth myne herte vnder his seale
As trusty and true as any steele
So that no deuocion
Ne had I in the sermon
Of dame Reason, ne of her rede
It toke no soiour in myne heed
For all sede out at one ere
That in that other she dyd lere
Fully on me she lost her lore
Her speche me greued wonder sore

That vnto her for yre I sayd
For angre, as I dydde abrayde
Dame, and is it your wyll algate
That I not loue, but that I hate
All men as ye me teche
For yf I do after your speche
Syth that ye sayne loue is not good
Than must I nedes saye with mode
yf I it leue, in hatred aye
Lyuen, and voyde loue alwaye
From me a synfull wrecche
Hated of all that recche
I maye not go none other gate
For eyther must I loue or hate
And yf I hate men of newe
Wore than loue it woll me rewe
As by your preching semeth me
For loue nothyng ne prayseth she
Ye yeue good counsayle sykerly
That precheth me al day, that I
Shulde not loues lore alowe
He were a foole wolde you not trowe
In speche also ye han me taught
Another loue that knowen is nought
which I herde you not repreue
To loue eche other by your leue
yf ye I wolde diffyne it me
I wolde gladly here to se
At the lest yf I may lere
Of sondry loues the manere.

¶ Raison.

Certes frende, a fole art thou
whan that thou nothynge
wolt alowe
That I for thy profyte saye
Yet woll I saye the more in
faye
For I am redy at the leest
To acomplysh thy requeste
But I not where it woll auayle
In vayne peraduenture I shall trauayle
Loue there is in sondry wyse
As I shall the here deuyse.
For some loue ieruil is and good
I mene nat ꝑ which maketh the woode
And bryngeth the in many a fytte
And rauysheth fro the all thy wytte
It is so marueylous and queynt
with suche loue be nomore acqueynt

Cõment

¶ Cõment Reason diffinist Iunsete.

LOue of frenshyppe also there is
whych maketh no man done amys
Of wyl knytte betwytte two
That wol not breke for wele ne wo
whych longe is lykely to contune
whan wyl and goodes bene in commune
Grounded by goddes ordinaunce
Hoole wythout disordaunce
with hem holdyng cõtinute
Of al her good in charite
That there be none exceptioun
Through chaungyng of ententioun
That eche helpe other at her nede
And wysely hele both worde and dede
Trewe of meanyng, benoyde of slouth
For wytte is nought wythout trouth
So that the tone dare al his thought
Sayne to his frende, and spare nought
As to him selfe without diedyng
To be discouered by wreyng
For glad is that continuction
whan there is none suspection
whom they wolde proue
That trewe and partyte weren in loue
For no man may be amiable
But yf he be so ferme and stable
That fortune chaunge hym nat ne blynde
But that hys frende alwaye hym fynde
Both poore and ryche in o state
For yf hys frende through any gate
wol complayne of his pouerte
He shulde nat byde so longe, tyl he
Of hys helpyng hym requyre
For good dede done through prayere
Is solde and bought to dere ywys
To here that of great valure is
For here fulfylled of gentylnesse
Can ryche deineaue his distresse
And man that worthy is of name
To aske often hath great shame
A good man dremeth in his thought
For shame whan he aseth ought
He hath great thought, and diedeth aye
For hys disease whan he shal praye
His frende lest that he warned be
Tyl that he preue his stabilite
But whan that he hath founden one
That trusty is and trewe as stone
And assayed him at al
And founde him stedfast as a wal
And of hys frenshyp be certayne
He shal him shewe, both ioye and payne
And al that dare thynke or saye
wythout shame, as he wel maye
For howe shulde he a shamed be
Of such one as I tolde the
For whan he wotte hys secrete thought
The thyrde shal know therof ryght nought
For twey in nombre is better than thre
In euery counsayle and secree
Repreue he diedeth neuer a dele
who that besette his wordes wele
For euery wyse man out of drede
Can kepe hys tonge tyll he se nede
And fooles can nat holde her tonge
A fooles belle is sone ronge
Yet shal a trewe frende do more
To helpe his felowe of hys sore
And succour him whan he hath nede
In al that he may done in dede
And gladder that he hym pleaseth
Than his felowe that he easeth
And yf he do not his request
He shal as much him moleste
As hys felowe, for that he
Wayte not fulfyl hys volunte
Fully as he hath requyred
If both the hertes loue hath fyred
Ioye and wo they shal departe
And take euenly eche hys parte
Halfe his anoye he shall haue aye
And comfort what that he maye
And of thys blysse parte shal he
If loue wol departed be.

AND whylom of thys write
Spake Tullius in a dyte
And shulde maken hys request
Unto his frende, that is honest
And he goodly shulde it fulfyl
But it the more were out of skyl
And otherwyse not graunt therto
Excepte only in causes two
If men his frende to dethe wolde dryue
Let hym be besy to saue hys lyue
Also yf men wollen hym assayle
Of hys worshyp to make hym rayle
And hynderen hym of his renoun
Let him wyth ful ententioun
his deuer done in eche degre

That hys frende ne shamed be
In thys two case wyth hys myght
Takyng no kepe to skyl nor ryght
As ferre as loue maye hym excuse
Thys ought no man to refuse
Thys loue that I haue tolde the
Is nothyng contrary to me
Thys wol I that thou folowe weie
And leaue the tother euery deie
Thys loue to vertue al entendeth
The tother fooles bient and shendeth.

Another loue also there is
That is contrary vnto thys
whych desyre is so constrayned
That is but wyl fayned
Awaye fro trouth it doth so varye
That to good loue it is contrarye
For it maymeth in many wyse
Syke hertes wyth couetyse
Al in wynninge and in profyte
Suche loue setteth his delyte
Thys loue so hangeth in balaunce
That yf it lese hys hope parchaunce
Of lucre, that he is set vpon
It wol fayle, and quenche anon
For no man may be amorous
Ne in hys lyuyng vertuous
But he loue more in moode
Men for hem selfe, than for her goode
For loue that profyte doth abyde
Is falle and bydeth not in no tyde
Loue cometh of dame fortune
That lytle whyle wyl contune
For it shall chaungen wonder soone
And take eclyps ryght as the moone
whan he is from vs lette
Through erth, that betwyxt is sette
The sunne and her, as it may fal
Be it in partie, or in al
The shadowe maketh her hernes merke
And her hornes to shewe derke
That parte, where she hath lost her lyght
Of Phebus fully, and the syght
Tyl whan the shadowe is ouerpast
She is enlumyned agayne as fast
Through the bryghtnesse of the sunne hernes
That reueth to her agayne her lemes
That loue is ryght of such nature
Nowe is fayre, and nowe obscure
nowe bryght, nowe dirkly of maniere
And whylom dymme, and whylom clere
As sone as pouerte gynneth take
wyth mantel and weedes blake
hydeth of loue the lyght away
That in to nyght it turneth day
It may not se ryches shyne
Tyl the blacke shadowes fyne
For whan rychesse shyneth bryght
Loue recouereth ayen his lyght
And whan it fayleth, he wol flyt
And as she greueth, so greueth it
Of thys loue here what I saye
The ryche men are loued aye
And namely tho that sparande bene
That wol nat washe her hertes clene
Of the frith nor of the vice
Of gredy hernyng auarice
The ryche man ful foule is ywys
That weneth that he loued is
If that hys herte it vnderstode
It is not he, it is hys good
he may wel weten in his thought
Hys good is loued, and he ryght nought
For yf he be a nygarde ek
Men wyl not set by hym a lek
But haten hym, thys is the soth
Lo what profyte hys catel doth
Of euery man that may hym se
It getteth hym nought but enuye
But he amende hym selfe of that vice
And knowe hym selfe he is not wyse
Certes he shulde aye frendly be
To gette hym loue also bene fre
Or els he is not wyse ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage
That he not loueth, his dede proueth
whan he hys rychesse so wel loueth
That he wol hyde it aye and spare
Hys poore frendes seme forfare
To kepen aye hys purpose
Tyl for drede hys eyen close
And tyl a wycked death hym take
Hym had leuer a sondre shake
And let al hys lymmes a sondre ryue
Than leaue his rychesse in his lyue
He thynketh to parte it wyth no man
Certayne no loue is in hym than
Howe shulde loue wythin hym be
whan in hys herte is no pyte
That he trespaseth wel I wate
For eche man knoweth hys estate
For wel hym ought to be reproued
That loueth nought, ne is not loued

But

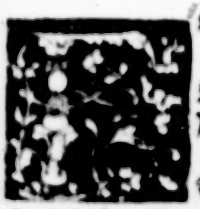
But syth we arne to fortune comen
And hath our sermon of her nomen
I wonder wyl I tel the nowe
Thou hardest neuer such one I trowe
I not where thou me leuen shal
Though sothfastnesse it be al
Is it is wryten: and is soth
That vnto men more profyte doth
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than the swote and debonaire
And yf the thynke it is doutable
It is through argument prouable
For the debonayre and softe
Falseth and begyleth ofte
For lyche a mother she can cherysshe
And myrken as doth a notice
And of her good to hym deles
And yeueth him part of her ioweles
With great rychesse and degnite
And hem she boteth stabilyte
In a state that is not stable
But chaungyng aye and variable
And fedeth hem wyth glory vayne
And worldly blysse noncertayne
Whan she hym setteth on her whele
Than wene they to be right wele
And in so stable state wythall
That neuer they wene for to fall
And whan they sette so hygh be
They wene to haue in certeynte
Of hertly frendes to great nombre
That nothynge myght her state encombre
They truste hem so on euery syde
Weninge wyth hym they wolde abyde
In euery parel and mischaunce
Without chaunge or variaunce
Both of catel and of good
And also for to spende her blood
And al her membres for to spyll
Onely for to fulfyl her wyll
They maken it hole in many wyse
And boten hem her full seruyse
Lowe sore that it do hem smerte
In to her very naked herte
Herte and also hole they gyue
For the tyme that they may lyue
So that wyth her flatterye
They maken fooles glorifye
Of her wordes spekyng
And han chere of a resoysyng
And trowe hem as the Euangyle
And it is al falsheed and gyle
As they shal afterwarde se
Whan they arne fallen in pouerte
And bene of good and catel bare
Than shul they sene who frendes ware
For of an hundrede certaynly
Nor of a thousande ful scarsly
Ne shal they fynde bnethes one
Whan pouerte is comen vpon
For thus fortune that I of tell
Wyth men whan her lust to dwell
Maketh hem to lese her conysaunce
And norisheth hem in ignoraunce

But frowarde fortune and peruerse
Whan hygh estates she doth reuerse
And maketh hem to tomble doune
Of her whele wyth sodayne tourne
And from her rychesse doth hem flye
And plongeth hem in pouerte
As a stepmother enuyous
And layeth a playstre dolorous
Vnto her hertes wounded egre
Whych is not tempred wyth vynegre
But wyth pouerte and indigence
For to shewe by experience
That she is fortune verylye
In whom no man shulde affye
Nor in her yeftes haue fyaunce
She is so full of variaunce
Thus can she maken hye and lowe
Whan they from rychesse arne throwe
Fully to knowen without were
Frende of affecte, and frende of chere
And whych in loue weren trewe and stable
And whych also weren variable
After fortune her goddesse
In pouerte eyther in rychesse
For all that yeueth here out of drede
Vnhappe bereueth it in dede
For in fortune let not one
Of frendes whan fortune is gone
I meane tho frendes that wyll flee
Anone as entreth pouerte
And yet they woll not leaue hem so
But in eche place where they go
They cal hem wrecche, scorne, and blame
And of her mishappe hem diffame
And namely such as in rychesse
Pretenderth moost of stablenesse
Whan that they sawe hym set on lofte
And weren of hym socoured ofte
And moost yholpe in al her nede

But

But nowe they take no maner hede
But feyne in woyce of flatery
That nowe appereth her foly
Ouer al where so they fare
And fynde, go farewel feldefare
Al such frendes I bethrewe
For of trewe there be to fewe
But sothfast frendes, what so betyde
In euery fortune wollen abyde
They han her hertes in such nobleffe
That they nyl loue for no rychesse
Nor for that fortune may hem sende
They wollen hem socour and defende
And chaunge for solde ne for soze
For who is frende loueth euermoze
Though men drewe swerde hys frend to slo
He may not hewe her loue a two
But in case that I shal say
For pride and tre lese it he may
And for reproue by myscrete
And discouering of priuite-
wyth tonge woundyng as felon
Through venemous detraction
Frende in thys case wol gon hys way
For nothyng greue him moze ne may
And for nought cis wol he fle
If that he loue in stabylyte
And Certayne he is wel begone
Amonge a thousande that fynden one
For there maye be no rychesse
Ayenst frendshyp of worthynesse
For it ne may so hygh attayne
As may the valure, soth to sayne
Of hym that loueth trewe and wel
Frendshyp is more than is catel
For frende in courte aye better is
Than peny in purse certis
And fortune mishappyng
whan vpon men she is fadyng
Though misturnyng of her chaunce
And cast hem out of balaunce
She maketh through her aduersite
Men ful clerely for to se
Hym that is frende in existence
From hym that is by apparence
For in fortune maketh anone
To knowe thy frendes fro thy fone
By experience ryght as it is
The whych is more to prayse ywys
Than is much rychesse and tresoure
For more depe profyte and valour
Pouerte, and such aduersyte
Before than doth prosperite
For that one geueth complaunce
And the tother ignoraunce

And thys pouerte is in dede
Troth declared fro falshede
For fayne frendes it wol declare
And trewe also what wey they fare
For when he was in hys rychesse
Thefe frendes ful of doublenesse
Offred hym in many wyse
Herte and body, and seruyce
what wold he that haue you to haue bought
To knowen openly her thought
That he nowe hath so clerely sene
The false begyled he shulde haue bene
And he had than perceyued it
But rychesse nolde not let hym wytte
wel more auantage doth hym than
Wyth that maketh hym a wyse man
The great mischefe that he perceyueth
Than doth rychesse that hym deceyueth
Rychesse riche ne maketh nought
Hym that on treasour setteth hys thought
For rychesse stonte in sykernesse
And nothynge in habundaunce
For sykernesse al onely
Maketh men to lyue richly.



Or be that harbe mytches
ryeyne
Ne value in hys demayne
Lyueth more at ease, a more
is ryche
Than doth he that is ryche
And in hys herte hath soth to sayne
An hundrede maurs of whete grayne
Though he be chapman or marchaunt
And haue of golde many besaunt
For in the gettynge he hath such wo
And in the kepynge drede also
And sette euermore hys besynesse
For to encrease, and not to lesse
For to augment and multyplye
And thoughte on heapes that lye hym by
Yet neuer shal make hys rychesse
Asseth vnto hys gredynesse
But the poore that recheth nought
Saue of his lyuelode in hys thought
whych that he getteth wyth hys trauayle
He dredeth naught that it shal fayle
Though he haue lytle worldes goode

Neare

Meate and drynke, and easy foode
Upon hys traueyle and lyuyng
And also suffysaunt clothyng
Or yf in syckenesse that he fall
And loth meate and drynke wythall
Though he haue nat his [illegible] bye
He shal bethynke hym hastely
To put hym out of al daungere
That he of meate hath no mistere
Or that he may wyth lytle eke
Befounden, whyle that he is seke
Or that men shul hym berne in haste
To lyue tyl hys syckenesse be paste
To some Mayfondewe besyde
He caste nought what that hym betyde
He thynketh nought that euer he shal
In to any syckenesse fal.

AND though it fal as it maye be
That al be tyme spare shal he
Is moked as shal to hym suffyce
whyle he is syeke in any wyse
He doth for that he wol be
Content wyth his pouerte
wythout nede of any man
So much in lytle haue he can
He is apayed wyth hys fortune
And for he wyl be importune
Unto no wyght ne onerous
Nor of her goodesse coueytous
Therfore he spareth it may wel bene
hys pore estate for to sustene.

RYf hym lyste not for to
spare
But suffreth forthe, as not ne
ware
It laste it happeth as it maye
Ryght vnto hys last daye
And take the worlde as it wolde be
For euer in hert thynketh he
The sooner that deth hym slo
To paradyse the sooner go
He shall there for to lyue in blysse
where that he shal no good mysse
Thyder he hopeth god shal hym sende
After hys wretched lyues ende
Pythagoras hym selfe reherses
In a boke that the golden verses
Is cleped, for the nobylite
Of the honorable dyte
Than whan thou gost thy body fro
Free in the heyre thou shalt vp go
And leauen al humanyte
And purely lyue in deite
He is a foole wythouten were
That troweth haue hys countrey here
In erth is not our countre
That may these clerkes seyne and se
In Boece of consolation
where it is maked mention
Of our countre playne at the eye
By techyng of philosophye
where leude men myght lere wyt
who so that wolde translaten it
If he be such that can wel lyue
After hys rent, maye hym yeue
And not desyreth more to haue
Than may fro pouerte hym saue
A wyse man sayd, as we may sene
Is no man wretched, but he it wene
Be he kynge, knyght, or rybaude
And many a rybaude is mery and baude
That swynketh, & bereth both day & nyght
Many a burthen of great myght
The whych doth hym lasse offence
For he suffreth in patience
They laugh and daunce, tryppe and synge
And lay nought vp for her lyuyng
But in the taueme all dispendeth
The wynnyng that god hem sendeth
Than goth he fardels for to bere
wyth as good chere as he dyd ere
To swynke and trauayle he not tayneth
For to robben he disdayneth
But right anon, after hys swynke
He goeth to the taueme for to drynke
Al these are ryche in abundaunce
That can thus haue suffysaunce
wel more than can an vsurere
As god wel knoweth, wythout were
For an vsurer, so god me se
Shal neuer for rychesse ryche be

But euermore poore and indigent
Scarce and gredy in hys entent.
For soth it is, whom it displese
There may no marchaunt lyue at ese
Hys herte in such a where is set
That it quycke brenneth to get
Ne neuer shal, though he hath geten
Though he hath golde in garners yeten
For to be nedy he dredeth sore
wherfore to getten more and more

He set

He set hys hert and hys delyte
So hote he brenneth in the fyre
Of couetyse, that maketh hym wood
To purchase other mennes good
He vnderlongeth a great payne
That vndertaketh to drynke vp Sayne
For the more he drynketh aye
The more he leaueth, soth to saye
Thus is thurst of false getting
That last euer in coueityng
And the anguyshe and distresse
wyth the fyre of gredynesse
Whe fyghteth with hym aye, and streyneth
That his herte asonder ryueth
Suche gredynesse hym assayleth
That whan he most hath, moste he fayleth
Physicians and aduocates
Gone ryght by the same yates
They set her seyence for wenyng
And haunt her craft for great gettyng
Her wenyng is of suche swetnesse
That yf a man fall in syknesse
They are full glad for her encrese
For by her wyl, without lease
Euerych man shulde be seke
And though they dye they set not a leke
After whan they the golde haue take
Ful lytle care for hem they make
They wolde that fourty were syche at ones
Yea two hundred in fleshe and bones
And yet two thousande, as I gesse
For to encresen her rychesse
They wol not worchen in no wyse
But for lucre and couetyse
For physycke grouneth fyll by (phy)
The physycien also sothly
And sythen it gothe fro fye to fye
To trust on hem it is folye
For they nyl in no maner gre
Do ryght nought for charite
Eke in the same sect are sette
Al tho that prechen for to gette
worshyps, honour, and rychesse
Her hertes arne in great distresse
That folke lyue not holyly
But abouen al specially
Such as prechen veryglory
And toward god haue no memory
But forth as ypocrites trace
And to her soules deth purchace
And outwarde shewyng holynesse
Though they be ful of cursednesse
Nat lyche to the apostles tweine
They desceyue other and hem seine
Begyled is the gyler than
For preachyng of a cursed man
Thoughe to other may profyte
Hym selfe it auayleth not amyte
For ofte good predicatioun
Cometh of yuel entencioun
To hym nat varyeth hys preachyng
Al helpe he other wyth hys teachyng
For where they good ensample take
There is he wyth hayn glozye shake
But lette vs leuen these preachours
And speke of hem that in her tours
Heape vp her golde, and fast shette
And lore therun her herte sette
They neyther loue God ne drede
They kepe more than it is nede
And in her bagges sore et bynde
Out of the sunne, and of the wynde
They put vp more than nede ware
whan they sene pore folke forfare
For hungre dye, and for colde quake
God can wel vengeaunce therof take
The great mischeues hem assayleth
And thus in gadryng aye trauayleth
wyth much payne they wynne rychesse
And drede hem holdeth in distresse
To kepe that they gather faste
wyth sorowe they leaue it at the laste
wyth sorowe they both dye and lyue
That vnto rychesse her hertes yeue
And in defaute of loue it is
As it shewyth ful wel ywis
For yf these gredy, the soth to sayne
Loueden and were loued agayne
And good loue reygned ouer al
Suche wyckednesse ne shulde fal
But he shulde yeue, that moost good had
To hem that weren in nede bestade
And lyue wythout false vsure
For charyte, ful clene and pure
If they hem yeue to goodnesse
Defendyng hem fro ydelenesse
In al thys worlde than poore none
we shude fynde I trowe not one
But chaunged is thys worlde vnstabale
For loue is ouer al vendable
we se that no man loueth nowe
But for wynnyng and for prowe
And loue is thralled in seruage
whan it is solde for auauntage

yet

yet women woll her bodyes sell
Suche soules goeth the dyuell of hell.

WHen Loue had tolde hem hys entent
The baronage to coũsayle went
In many sentences they fyll
And dyuersly they sayd her wyll
But after dyscorde they accorded
And her accorde to Loue recorded
Syr sayden they, we ben atone
We euen accorde of euerychone
Out take Rychesse all onely
That swerne hath full hauteynly
That she the castell nyll not assayle
Ne smyte a stroke in thys batayle
With dart ne mace, speare, ne knyfe
For nam that speaketh, or beareth the lyfe
And blameth your empryse ywys
And from our hoste departed is
At leest waye as in thys plyte
So hath she thys man in dyspyte
For she sayeth he ne loued her neuer
And therfore she woll hate hym euer
For he woll gather no treasore
He hath her wrath for euermore
He agrite her neuer in other caas
Lo here all holy hys trespas
She sayeth well, that thys other daye
He asked her leaue to gone the waye
That is clypped to moche reuynge
And spake full fayre in hys prayenge
But when he prayed her, poore was he
Therfore she warned hym the entre
Ne yet is he not thriuen so
That he hath getten a peny or two
That quytely is hys owne in holde
Thus hath Rychesse vs all tolde
And when Rychesse vs thys recorded
Wythouten her we ben accorded.

AND we fynde in our accordaunce
That false Semblant and Abstinaunce
With all the folke of her batayle
Shull at the hynder gate assayle
That wycked Tonge hath in keepynge
With hys Normans full of rangynge
And with hem Curtesy and Largesse
That shull shewe her hardynesse
To the olde wyfe that kepte so harde
Fayre welcomynge wythin her warde
Then shall Delyte and well Helynge
Fonde, Shame adowne to brynge
With all her hoost early and late
They shull assayle that yike gate
Agaynst Dyede shall Hardynesse
Assayle, and also Sykernesse
With all the folke of her leadynge
That neuer wyll what was fleynge

RAunchyse shall fyght and eke Pyte
With Daũgere ful of cruelte
Thus is your hoost ordeyned wele
down shal ỹ castel euery dele
Yf euerych do hys entent
So that Venus be present
Your mother full of vasselage
That canne ynough of suche vlage
Wythouten her maye no wyght spede
Thys werke, neyther for worde ne dede
Therfore is good ye for her sende
For through her maye thys worke amende.

ORdynges, my mother the goddesse
That is my lady, and my maystresse
Nys not al at my wyllyng
Ne doth not al my desyryng
Yet canne she somtyme done labour
When that her luste in my socour
As my nede is for to atcheue
But nowe I thynke her nat to greue
My mother is she, and of chylde hede
I both worshyp her, and eke drede
For who that dredeth syre ne dame
Shall it abye in body or name
And nathelesse, yet conne we
Sende after her yf nede be
And were she nygh she cõmen wolde
I trowe that nothynge myght her holde

MY mother is of great prowesse
She hath tane many a fortresse
That cost hath many a pound er this
There I nas not present ywys
And yet men sayd it was my dede
But I come neuer in that stede
Ne me ne lyketh so mote I the
That suche toures ben take wyth me

For why? My thynketh that in no wyse
It maye be cleped but marchaundyse.

GO bye a courser blacke or whyte
And paye therfore, then arte ꝑ quyte
The marchaūt oweth ꝑ right nought
Ne thou hym when thou it bought
I woll not sellynge clepe peurynge
For sellynge asketh no guerdonynge
Here lyeth no thanke, ne no meryte
That one goeth from that other all quyte
But thys sellynge is not semblable
For when hys horse is in the stable
He maye it selle agayne parde
And wynnen on it, suche happe maye be
All maye the manne not lese ywys
For at the leest the shynne is hys
Or els, yf it so betyde
That he woll kepe hys horse to ryde
Yet is he lorde aye of hys horse
But thylke chaffare is well worse
There Venus entremeteth ought
For who so suche chaffare hath bought
He shall not wotchen so wysely
That he ne shall lese all vtterly
Both hys money, and hys caffare
But the seller of the ware
The pryse and profite haue shall
Certaynly the byer shall lese all
For he ne can so dere it bye
To haue lordshyppe, and full maystry
Ne haue power to make lettynge
Neyther for yefte ne for preachynge
That of hys chaffare maugre hys
Another shall haue as moche ywys
Yf he woll yeue as moche as he
Of what countrey so that he be
Or for ryght nought so happe maye
Yf he can flatter her to her paye
Ben then suche marchaūntes wyse
No, but fooles in euery wyse
when they bye suche thynge wylfully
There as they lese her good folyly
But natheleſſe, thys dare I saye
My mother is not wonte to paye
For she is neyther so foole ne nyce
To entremete her of suche vyce
But trust well, he shall paye all
That repent of hys bargayne shall
when pouerte putte hym in dystresse
All were the scholer to Rychesse
That is for me in great yernynge
when she assenteth to my wyllynge.

BVt my mother sayntꝭ Venus
And by her father Saturnus
That her engendred by hys lyst
But not vpon hys wedded wyfe
Yet woll I make vnto you swere
To make thys thynge the surere
Nowe by that fayth, and that beaute
That I owe to all my brethren free
Of whych, there nys wyght vnder heuen
That can her fathers names neuen
So dyuers and so many there be
That wyth my mother haue be pryue
Yet wolde I swere for ſyckernesse
The Pole of helle to my wytnesse
Nowe drynke I not thys vere clarre
Yf that I lye, or forswoone be
For of the goddes the vsage is
That who so hym forswereth amys
Shall that vere drynke no clarre
Nowe haue I swoone ynough parde
Yf I forswere me then am I loone
But I woll neuer be forswoone
Syth Rychesse hath me sayled here
She shall abye that trespas full dere
At leest waye but her arme
wyth swerde, or ſparth, or gysarme
For certes syth she loueth not me
Fro thylke tyme that she maye se
The caſtell and the toure to shake
In soꝛye tyme she shall awake
Yf I maye grype a ryche manne
I shall so pulle hym, yf I canne
That he shall in a fewe stoundes
Lese all hys markes, and hys poundes
I shall hym make hys pens out ſpynge
But they in hys garnet ſpryngꝭ
Our maydens shall the pluckꝭ hym so
That hym shall neden fethers mo
And make hym sell hys lande to ſpende
But he the bette conne hym defende.

POꝛe men han made her lorde of me
All thoughe they not ſo myghtye be
That they maye fede me in delyte
I woll not haue hem in dyſpyte
No good man hateth hem, as I geſſe
For chynche and felonꝭ is rychesse
That ſo can chaſe hem and dyſpyſe

And

And hem defoule in sondrye wyse
They louen ful bette, so god me spede
Than dothe the riche chynchy grede
And bene (in good faythe) more stable
And trewer, and more seruyable
And therfore it suffyseth me
Her good herte, and her beaute
They han on me sette all her thought
And therfore I forȝet hem nought
I woll hem dȝynge in great nobleſſe
If that I were god of Rychesſe
As I am god of Loue sothely
Suche routh vpon her playnt haue I
Therfore I muſte hys socour be
That payneth hym to seruen me
For yf he deyde for loue of thys
Then semeth in me no loue ther is

Yt sayd they, soth is euery dele
That ye reherce, & we wot wele
Thylke oth to hold is resonable
For it is good and couenable
That ye on eych mé han swoȝne
For syr, thys wote we well beforne
Yf eyche men done you homage
That is as fooles done outrage
But ye shull not forswoȝne be
Ne let therfore to dȝynke clarre
Or pyment maked freshe and newe
Ladyes shull hem suche pepyr bȝewe
Yf that they fall in to her laas
That they for wo mowe sarne alas
Ladyes shullen euer so curteys be
That they shall qwyte your othe all free
Ne seketh neuer other bycause
For they shall speake wyth hem so fayre
That ye shall holde ye payde full wele
Though ye you medle neuer a dele
Late ladyes worche wyth her thynges
They shall hem tell so fele tydynges
And moue hem eke so many requestes
By flatery, that not honest is
And therto yeue hem suche tankynges
what wyth kyssynge, and wyth chalkynges
That certes yf they trowed be
Shall neuer leaue hem londe ne fee
That it nyll as the morble fare
Of whych they fyrst delyuered are
Nowe maye ye tell vs all your wyll
And we your hestes shall fulfyll

But False semblant dare not for drede
Of you syr, medle hym of thys dede
For he sayeth, that ye ben hys so
Be not, yf ye wol worche hym wo
wherfore we praye you all beausyre
That ye forgyue hym nowe your yre
And that he maye dwell as your man
wyth Abstinence hys dere lemman
Thys our acorde and our wyll nowe
Parfey sayd Loue, I graunt it you
I woll well holde hym for my man
Nowe let hym come, and he forth ran
False semblant (q Loue) in thys wyse
I take the here to my seruyce
That thou our frendes helpe alwaye
And hyndreth hem neyther nyght ne daye
But do thy myght hem to releue
And eke our enemyes that thou greue
Thyne be thys myght, I graunt it the
Wy kynge of harlotes shalte thou be
we woll that thou haue suche honour
Certayne thou arte a false traytour
And eke a thefe, syth thou were borne
A thousande tymes thou arte forswoȝne
But natheleſſe in our herynge
To put our folke out of doutynge
I bydde the teche hem, wost thou howe
By some generall sygne nowe
In what place thou shalt founden be
Yf that men had myster of the
And howe men shall the best espye
For the to knowe is great mayſtrye
Tell in what place is thyne hauntynge
Syr I haue full dyuers wonnynge
That I kepe not reherſed be
So that ye wolde respyten me
For yf that I tell you the sothe
I maye haue harme and shame bothe
Yf that my felowes wyſten it
Wy tales shulden me be quyt
For certayne they wolde hate me
Yf euer I knewe her cruelte
For they wolde ouer all holde hem styll
Of trouth, that is agayne her wyll
Suche tales kepen they not here
I myght eftsone bye it full dere
Yf I sayd of hem any thynge
That ought dysplaseth to her herynge
For what worde that hem prycke or byteth
In that worde none of hem delyteth
All were it gospell the euangyle
That wolde reproue hem of her gyle

For they are cruell and hautayne
And thys thynge wote I well certayne
yf I speake ought to payre her loos
Your court shall not so well be cloos
That they ne shall wyte it at last
Of good men am I nought agast
For they woll taken on hem nothynge
when that they knowe all my meanynge
But he that woll it on hem take
He woll hym selfe suspecious make
That he hys lyfe let couertly
In gyle and in Ipocrisy
That me engendred and yaue fostrynge
They made a full good engendrynge
(Quod Loue) for who so sothly tell
They engendred the dyuell of hell.

But nedely, howe so euer it be
(Quod loue) I wyll a charge þ
To tel anon thy wonyng places
Hearynge eche wyght that in
thys place is
And what lyfe that thou lyuest also
Hyde it no lenger nowe, wherto
Thou must dyscouer all thy worchynge
Howe thou seruest, and of what thynge
Though þ thou shuldest for thy soth sawe
Ben all to beaten and to drawe
And yet arte thou not wonte parde
But natheleſſe, though thou beaten be
Thou shalt not be the fyrst that so
Hath for sothsawe suffred wo.

Syr, syth that it maye lyken you
Thoughe that I shulde be
slayne eyght nowe
I shal done your comaundement
For therto haue I great talent

Wythoute wordes mo, eyght than
False Semblant hys sermó began
And sayd hem thus in audience
Barons take hede of my sentẽce
þ wyght þ lyst to haue knowing
Of false semblant, full of flatterynge
He must in worldly folke hym feke
And certes in the cloyſters eke
I wone no where, but in hem twey
But not lyke euen, soth to say
Shortly I woll herberowe me
There I hope best to hulstred be
And certaynly, syker est hydynge
Is vnderneth humblest clothynge

Religious folke ben full couerte
Seculer folke ben more apperte
But natheleſſe, I wyll not blame
Religious folke, ne hem dyſſame
In what habyte that euer they go
Religyon humble, and trewe also
woll I not blame, ne dyſpyſe
But I nyll loue it in no wyſe
I meane of false religious
That stoute ben, and malicious
That wollen in an habyte go
And setten not her herte therto.

Religious folke ben all pytous
Thou shalt not sene one dyſpytous
They louen no pryde, ne no stryfe
But humbly they woll lede her lyfe
wyth whych folke woll I neuer be
And yf I dwell, I fayne me
I maye well in her habyte go
But me were leuer my necke a two
Then lette a purpoſe that I take
what couenaunt that euer I make
I dwell wyth hem that proude be
And full of wyles and subtelte
That worſhyp of thys worlde coueyten
And great nede connen exployten
And gone and gadren great pitaunces
And purchace hem the acquayntaunces
Of men that myghty lyfe may leden
And fayne hem poore, and hem selfe leden
wyth good morcels delicious
And drynken good wyne precious
And preche vs pouert and dyſtreſſe
And fylben hem selfe great rychesse
wyth wyly nettes, that they caste
It woll come foule out at the laſte
They ben fro clene religion went
They make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule concluſyon
I haue a robe of religion
Then am I all religious
Thys argument is all roignous
It is not worth a croked bryre
Habyte ne maketh neyther monke ne frere
But clene lyfe and deuocion
Maketh good men of religion
Natheleſſe, there can none answere
Howe hygh that euer hys heed he bere
wyth raſour whetted neuer so kene
That gyle in braunches cutte thurtene
There can no wyght dyſtynct it so

That

That he dare saye a worde therto.
But what herberowe that euer I take
Or what semblaunt that euer I make
I meane but gyle, and folowe that
For right no more then gybbe our cat
(That awaiteth myce & rattes to kyllen)
Ne entende I but to begylen
Ne no wyght may, by my clothynge
were wyth what folke is my dwellynge
Ne by my wordes yet parde
Tho soft and so pleasaunt they be
Beholde the dedes that I do
But thou be blynde thou oughtest so
For harpe her wordes fro her dede
They thynke on gyle wythout drede
what maner clothynge that they were
Or what estate that euer they bere
Lered or leude, lorde or lady
knyght, squyer, burgeys, or bayly.

Ryght thus whyle False semblant sermoneth
Eft sones Loue hym ateseneth
And blake hys tale in hys speakynge
As though he had hym tolde leasynge
And sayd: what deuell is that I here
what folke hast thou vs nempned here
Saye men fynde religion
In worldly habitacion
Yea syr, it foloweth not that they
Shulde lede a wycked lyfe parfey
Ne not therfore her soules lese
That hem to worldly clothes chese
For certes it were great pyte
Wenne maye in seculer clothes se
Florysshen holy religioun
Full many a sayne in felde and towne
wyth many a virgyn glorious
Deuoute, and full religious
Han dyed, that cómen cloth aye beren
Yet sayntes neuertheleſſe they weren
I coude reckon you many a ten
Yea, welnygh all these holy wemen
That memne in churches herry and seke
Both maydens, and these wyues eke
That baren full many a fayre chylde here
weared alwaye clothes seculere
And in the same bydden they
That sayntes weren, and ben alwaye
¶ The xi. thousande maydens here
That bearen in heuen her cierges clere
Of whych men rede in church and synge
were take in seculer clothynge
when they receyued martyrdome
And wennen heuen vnto her home
Good herte maketh the good thought
The clothynge reueth ne reueth nought
The good thought and the worthynge
That maketh the religion flourynge
There lyeth the good religioun
After the ryght entencioun

Who so take a wethers skynne
And wrapped a gredy wolfe therinne
For he shuld go with lãbes whyte
weneſt thou not he wolde hem byte
yes: neuertheleſſe, as he were wode
he wolde hem wirry, and drynke the blode
And well the rather hem dysceyue
For syth they coude not perceyue
Hys tregette, and hys crueltè
They wolde hym folowe all tho he flye.

If there be wolues of suche hewe
Amonges these apostles newe
Thou holy church thou mayſt be wayled
Syth that thy cyte is assayled
Through knyghtes of thyne owne table
God wote thy lordshyp is doutable
yf they enforce it to wyn
That shulde defende it fro wythin
who myght defence ayenſt hem make
wythout stroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell
wythout displayenge of penſell
And yf god nyll done it socoure
But let renne in thys coloure
Thou muſte thy heeſtes letten be
Then is there nought, but yelde the
Or yeue hem trybute doutles
And holde it of hem to haue pees
But greater harme betyde the
That they all mayſter of it be
well conne they scorne the wythall
By day stuffen they the wall
And all the nyght they myuen there
Naye, thou planten muſte els where
Thyne ympes, yf thou wolt fruyte haue
Abyde not there thy ſelfe to saue.

But now peace, here I turne agayne
I woll nomore of thys thynge sayne
yf I maye passen me hereby

I myght maken you merry
But I woll heten you alwaye
To helpe your frendes what I maye
So they wollen my company
For they be shent all vtterly
But yf so fall, that I be
Ofte wyth hem, and they wyth me
And eke my lemman mote they serue
Or they shull not my loue deserue
Forsoth I am a false traytour
God iuged me for a thefe trechour
Forsworne I am, but well nygh none
wote of my gyle, tyll it be done

THrough me hath many one death receaued
That my treget neuer apperceyued
And yet receyueth, and shall receyue
That my falsnesse shall neuer apperceyue
But who so doth, yf he wyse be
Hym is ryght good beware of me
But so slyghe is the apperceyuynge
That all to late cometh knowynge
For Protheus that coude hym chaunge
In euery shappe, homely and straunge
Coude neuer suche gyle ne treasoune
As I, for I come neuer in towne
There as I myght knowen be
Though men me both myght here and se
Full well I can my clothes chaunge
Take one, and make another straunge
Nowe am I knyght, nowe chastelayne
Nowe prelate, and nowe chapelayne
Nowe preest, nowe clerke, and nowe sodeare
Nowe am I mayster, nowe scholere
Nowe monke, nowe chanon, nowe bayly
what euer myster man am I
Nowe am I prynce, nowe am I page
And can by herte euery langage
Somtyme am I hoore and olde
Nowe am I yonge, stoute, and bolde
Nowe am I Robert, nowe Robyn
Nowe Frere mynor, nowe Jacobyn
And wyth me foloweth my loteby
To done me solace and company
That hyght Dame Wastinence, and taygned
In many a queynt arraye fayned
Ryght as it cometh to her lykynge
I fulfyll all her desyrynge
Somtyme a womans cloth take I
Nowe am I a mayde, nowe lady
Somtyme I am religious
Nowe lyke an anker in an hous
Somtyme am I priorelle
And nowe a nonne, and nowe abbesse
And go through all regiouns
Seekynge all religiouns
But to what ender that I am swoorne
I take the strawe and beate the corne
To holy folke I enhabyte
I aske no more but her habyte
what woll ye more in euery wyse
Ryght as me lyst I me dysgyse
well can I beare me vnder wede
Unlyke is my worde to my dede
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The people, through my priuyleges all
That bene in christendome a lyue
I maye assoyle, and I maye shryue
That no prelate maye let me
All folke, where euer they founde be
I not no prelate maye done so
But I onlye, and no mo
That made thylke establyshynge
Nowe is not thys a propre thynge
But were my sleyghtes apperceyued
As I was wonte, and woste thou why
For I dyd hem a tregetry
But therof yeue I a lyteil tale
I haue the syluer and the male
So haue I preached and eke shryuen
So haue I take, so haue I yeuen
Through her foly, husbande and wyfe
That I lede ryght a holy lyfe
Through symplesse of the prelacye
They knowe not all my tregettrye.

BUt for as moche as a man and wyfe
Shulde shewe her perysshe preest her lyfe
Ones a yere, as sayth the boke
Er any wyght hys housel toke
Then haue I priuyleges large
That maye of moche thynge dyscharge
For he maye saye ryght thus parde
Syr preest, in shryfte I tell it the
That he to whome that I am shryuen
Hath me assoyled, and me yeuen
Penaunce sothly for my syn
whych that I fonde me gylty in
Ne I ne haue neuer entencion
To make double confessyon
Ne reherce efte my shryft to the

O shrift is ryght ynough to me
Thys ought the sufficyse wele
Ne be not rebell neuer a dele
For certes, though thou haddest it swore
I wote no preest ne prelate bore
That may to shrift efte me constrayne
And yf they done I woll me playne
For I wote where to playne wele
Thou shalt not streyne me a dele
Ne enforce me, ne not me trouble
To make my confessyon double
Ne I haue none affection
To haue double absolution
The fyrst is right ynough to me
Thys latter assoylyng quyte I the
I am vnbounde, what mayst thou fynde
More of my synnes me to vnbynde
For he that myght hath in hys honde
Of all my synnes me vnbonde
And yf thou wolte me thus constrayne
That me mote nedes on the playne
There shall no iuge imperyall
Ne byshop, ne officiall
Done iugement on me, for I
Shall gone and playne me openly
Unto my shrift father ne we
That hyght Frere wolfe vntrewe
And he shall chuse hym for me
For I trowe he can hamper the
But lorde he wolde be wrothe wythal
If men hym wolde Frere wolfe call
For he wolde haue no pacience
But done all cruell vengience
He wolde hys myght done at the leest
Nothyng spare for goddes heest
And god so wysse be my socour
But thou yeue me my sauyour
At Ester, whan it lyketh me
wythout preasyng more on the
I woll forthe, and to hym gone
And he shall housell me anon
For I am out of thy grutchyng
I kepe not deale wyth the nothyng
Thus may he shryue hym, that forsaketh
hys parysche preest, and to me taketh
And yf the preest woll hym refuse
I am full redy hym to accuse
And hym punische and hamper so
That he hys churche shall forgo.

But who so hath in hys kelyng
The consequence of such shryuyng
Shall sene, that preest maye neuer haue myght
To knowe the conscience a right
Of hym, that is vnder hys cure
And thys is ayenst holy scripture
That byddeth euery heerd honest
Haue very knowyng of hys beest
But poore folke that gon by strete
That haue no golde, ne sommes grete
Hem wolde I let to her prelates
Or let her preestes knowe her states
For to me right nought yeue they
And why it is, for they ne may
They ben so bare, I take no kepe
But I woll haue the fatte shepe
Let parysche preestes haue the lene
I yeue not of her harme a bene
And yf that prelates grutche it
That oughten woth be in her wyt
To lese her fatte beestes so
I shall yeue hem a stroke or two
That they shall lesen wyth force
Ye, bothe her mytre and her croce
Thus rape I hem, and haue do longe
My priuileges ben so stronge.



Also Semblaunt wolde haue flyted here
But Loue ne made hym no suche chere
That he was werye of hys sawe
But for to make hym glad and fawe
He sayd, Tell on more specially
Howe thy thou seruest vntruely
Tell forthe, and shame the neuer a dele
For as thyne habyt sheweth wele
Thou seruest an holy Heremyte
Sothe is, but I am but an Ypocryte
Thou gost and precheste pouertee
Ye syr, but rychesse hath poste
Thou prechest abstynence also
Syr, I woll fyllen so mote I go
My paunche, of good meate and wyne
As shulde a maister of diuyne
For thowe that I me poore fayne
Yet all poore folke I disdayne.



Loue better the acqueyntaunce
Ten tymes of the kyng of Fraunce
Than of a poore mã of mylde mode
Though that hys soule be also good
For whan I se beggers quakyng

Naked on myrring all ſtynkyng
For hongre erye, and eke for care
I entremet not of her fare
They ben ſo poore, and full of pyne
They myght not ones yeue me a dyne
For they haue nothyng but her lyfe
what ſhulde he yeue that lyſeth hys kayſer
It is but folly to entremete
To ſeke in houndes neſt fatte mete
Lette beaste hem to the ſpyttle anone
But for me, comforte gette they none
But a ryche ſyche vlurere
wolde I bilyue and drawe nere
Hym woll I comforte and reherte
For I hoope of hys golde to gete
And yf that wycked dethe hym haue
I woll go wyth hym to hys graue
And yf there any reproue me
why that I lette the poore be
woſt thou howe I not aſcape
I ſaye and ſwere hym full rape
That riche menne han more reches
Of ſynne, than han poore wretches
And hanne of counſayle more myſter
And therfore I wolde drawe hem ner
But as great hurte, it maye ſo be
Hath a ſoule in right great powerte
As ſoule in great richeſſe forſothe
Al be it that they hurten bothe
For richeſſe and mendicitees
Bene cleped two extremytees
The meane is cleped Suffyſaunce
There lyeth of vertue the aboundaunce
For Salomon full well I wote
In hys Paraboles he wrote
As it is knowe of many a wyght
In hys thyrtene chapiter ryght
God thou me kepe for thy poore
Fro rycheſſe and mendycite
For yf a ryche manne hym dreſſe
To thynke to moche on rycheſſe
Hys herte on that ſo ferre is ſette
That he hys creatour dothe forgette
And hym that beggeth woll aye greue
Howe ſhulde I by hys worde hym leue
Unneth that he nys a mycher
For ſwerne, or els goddes lyer
Thus ſayethe Salomon ſawes
Ne we fynde written in no lawes
And namely in our chriſten laye
who ſo ſayethe yea, I dare ſay naye
That Chriſt, ne hys apoſtels dere
while that they walked in erthe here
were neuer ſeen herdred beggyng
For they nolden beggen for nothyng
And right thus were men wont to teche
And in thys wyſe wolde it preche
The maiſters of dyuinyte
Somtyme in Parys the cyte.

And yf men wold there gayne appoſe
The naked terte and lette the gloſe
It myght ſoone alloyed be
For menne may wel ꝑ ſoth ſe
That pardie they myght aſke a thynge
Playnly forthe wythout beggynge
For they weren goddes herdes dere
And cure of ſoules hadden here
They nolde nothyng begge her foode
For after Chriſt was done on rodde
wyth theyr proper hondes they wroug't
And wyth trauayle, and els nought
They wonnen all her ſuſtenaunce
And lyueden forthe in her penaunce
And the remenaunt yaf aſwaye
To other poore folkes alwaye
They neyther bylden toune ne halle
But thy in houſes ſmall wyth alle
A mighty man that canne and maye
Shulde wyth hys honde and body alwaye
Wynne hym hys foode in labouryng
If he ne haue rent or ſuche a thyng
All though he be religyous
And god to ſeruen curyous
Thus mote he done, or do trеſpas
But yf it be in certayne caas
That I can reherce, yf myſter be
Right well, whan the tyme I ſe.

Eke the boke of ſaynt Inſtyne
Be it i paper or perchmyne
There as he writte of theſe worthynges
Thou ſhalt ſene that none excuſynges
A parſyte man ne ſhulde ſeke
By wordes, ne by dedes eke
All though he be religyous
And god to ſeruen curyous
That he ne ſhall, ſo mote I go
Wyth proprе hondes, and body alſo

Get his

Get hys fode in laborynge
If he ne haue proprete of thynge
yet ſhulde he ſell all hys ſubſtaunce
And with hys ſwynke haue ſuſtenaunce
If he be parfyte in bounte
Thus han the bookes tolde me
For he that woll gone ydelly
And vſeth it aye beſyly
To haunten other mennes table
He is a trechour full of fable
Ne he ne may by good reaſon
Excuſe hym by hys oraiſon
For men behoueth in ſome gyſe
Ben ſomtyme in goddes ſeruyſe
To gone and purchaſen her nede
Men mote eaten, that is no drede
And ſlepe, and eke do other thyng
So longe may they leaue prayeng
So may they eke her prayer blynne
whyle that they werke her meate to wynne
Seynt Auſtyn woll therto accorde
In thylke boke that I recorde
Juſtinian eke, that made lawes
Hath thus forboden by olde lawes.

MAn, by payne to be deed
Mighty of body, to begge hys breed
If he may ſwynke it for to gete
Men ſhuld hym rather mayme
Or done of hym aperte iuſtyce (or bete
Than ſuffren hym in ſuche malyce
They done not well ſo mote I go
That taken ſuche almeſſe ſo
But yf they haue ſomme priuilege
That of the payne hem woll alege
But howe that is, can I not ſe
But yf the prynce diſceyued be
Ne I ne wene not ſykerly
That they may haue it ryghtfully
But I woll not determyne
Of princes power, ne defyne
Ne by my worde comprehende iwys
If it ſo ferre may ſtretche in thys
I woll not intremete a dele
But I trowe that the boke ſayethe wele
who that taketh almeſſes, that be
Dewe to folke that men may ſe
Lame, feble, wery, and bare
Poore, or in ſuche maner care
That conne wynne hem neuer mo
For they haue no power therto
Ne eateth hys owne dampnyng
But yf he lye, that made all thyng
And yf ye ſuche a truaunt fynde
Chaſtyſe hym well, yf ye be kynde
But they wolde hate you parcaas
If ye fyllen in her laas
They wolde eftſones do you ſcatche
If that they might, late or rathe
For they be not full pacient
That han the worlde thus foule blent
And weteth well, that god bad
The good man ſell all that he had
And folowe hym, and to poore it yeue
He wolde not therfore that he lyue
To ſeruen hym in mendience
For it was neuer hys ſentence
But he bad werken, whan that nede is
And folowe hym in good dedes
Saynt Poule, that loued all holy churche
He bade the apoſtels for to wurche
And wynnen her lyuelode in that wyſe
And hem defended truandyſe
And ſayd, werketh wyth your honden
Thus ſhulde the thyng be vnderſtonden
He nolde twys haue byd hem beggyng
Ne ſellen goſpell, ne prechyng
Leſt they betrafte, wyth her aſkyng
Folke of her catell or of her thyng
For in thys worlde is many a man
That yeueth hys good for he ne can
Werne it for ſhame, or els he
Wolde of the aſker delyuered be
And for he hym encombreth ſo
He yeueth hym good to let hym go
But it can hym no thyng profyte
They leſe the yefte and the merryte
The good folke that Poule to preched
Profred hym ofte, whan he hem teched
Some of her good in charyte
But therfore right nothyng toke he
But of hys hondewerke wolde he gete
Clothes to wrye hym, and hys mete.

TEll me than howe a man may lyuen
That al his good to poore hath yeuen
And woll but onely bydde hys bedes
And neuer wyth hondes labour hys nedes
Ware he do ſo ye ſyr: And howe
Syr, I woll gladly tell you

Saynt

SEynt Iuſten ſaith, a man may be
In houſes that han properte
As templers, and hoſpyteleers
And as theſe chanons regulers
Or roiyte monkes, or theſe blake
I woll no mo enſamples make
And take therof hys ſuſteynyng
For therin lythe no beggyng
But otherwayes not ywis
Yet Iuſtyn gabbeth not of thys
And yet full many a monke laboureth
That god in holy churche honoureth
For whan her ſwynkyng is agon
They rede and ſynge in churche anon.

AND for there hath ben great diſcorde
As manye a wyght may beare recorde
Upon the eſtate of mendicience
I woll ſhortly in your preſence
Tel howe a man may begge at nede
That hath not wherwith hym to fede
Maugre hys felowes iangelynges
For ſothfaſtneſſe woll none hydynges
And yet parcaſe I may abey
That I to you ſothly thus ſey.

IO here the caſe eſpeciall
If a man be ſo beſyall
That he of no craft hath ſcience
And nought deſyreth ignorence
Thā may he go a begging yerne
Tyll he ſome maner craft can lerne
Through whyche wythout truandyng
He may in trouthe haue hys lyuyng
Or yf he may done no labour
For elde, or ſickneſſe, or langour
Or for hys tendre age alſo
Than may he yet a beggyng go
Or yf he haue peraventure
Through vſage of hys nouture
Lyued ouer delycyouſly
Than ought men good folke comenly
Han of hys miſtheke ſome pyte
And ſuffren hym alſo, that he
May gon aboute and begge hys breed
That he be not for honger deed
Or yf he haue of craft connyng
And ſtrength alſo, and deſyryng
To worchen, as he had what
But he fynde neyther thys ne that
Than may he begge tyll that he
Haue geten hys neceſſyte
Or yf hys wynnyng be ſo lyte
That hys labour woll not acquyte
Hym ſufficiantly all hys lyuyng
Yet may he go hys breed beggyng
Fro doore to doore, he may go trace
Tyll he the remenaunt may purchace
Or yf a man wolde vndertake
Any empriſe for to make
In the reſcous of our lay
And it defenden, as he may
Be it with armes, or lettrure
Or other conenable cure
If it be ſo he poore be
Than may he begge, tyll that he
May fynde in trouthe for to ſwynke
And get hym clothe, meate, and drynke
Swynke he wyth hys hondes corporell
And not wyth hondes eſpyrituell.

IN all this caſe, and in ſemblables
If that there ben mo reſonables
He may begge, as I tell you here
And els not, in no maniere
As willyam ſeynt Amour wolde preche
And ofte wolde diſpute and teche
Of thys mater all openly
At Parys full ſolemply
And alſo god my ſoule bleſſe
As he had in thys ſtedfaſtneſſe
The accorde of the vniuerſyte
And of the people, as ſemeth me.

NO good man ought it to refuſe
Ne ought hym therof to excuſe
Be wyche or blythe, who ſo be
For I woll ſpeke, and tel it the
All ſhulde I dye, and be put doun
As was ſeynt Poule in derke priſoun
Or be exiled in thys caas
wyth wrong, as mayſter william was
That my mother Hypocriſe
Banyſſhed for her great enuye.

MY mother ſemed hym Seynt Amour
Thys noble dyd ſuche labour
To ſuſteyne euer the loyalte
That he to moche agryte me

He made

He made a boke, and let it write
Wherin hys lyfe he dyd all write
And wolde yche tenyed beggyng
And lyued by my trauelyng
If I ne had rent ne other good
What weneth he that I were wood
For labour might me neuer plese
I haue more wyll to ben at ese
And haue well leuer, sothe to saye
Before the people pattre and play
And wrye me in my forerye
Under a cope of papelardie.

QVod Loue what dyuell is this that I here
What wordes telleſt þ me here
What sir Falſhelle that apert is
Than dredeſt thou not god. No certis
For selde in great thyng shall he spede
In this worlde, that god woll drede
For folke that hem to vertue yeuen
And truely on her owne lyuen
And ben in goodneſſe aye contene
On hem is lytell thufte yſene
Suche folke drunken great miſese
That lyfe may me neuer plese
But ſe what golde han vſurers
And ſyluer eke in garners
Tauagers, and theſe monyours
Baylifes, bedels, prouoſt, countours
Theſe lyuen well nygh by rayne
The ſmale people hym mote enclyne
And they as wolues wol hem eten
Upon the poore folke they geten
Full moche of that they ſpende or kepe
Ne is none of hem that he nyll ſtrepe
And wryne hem ſelfe well at full
Wythout ſtraldyng, they hem pull
The ſtronge the feble ouergothe
But I that weare my ſymple clothe
Robbe bothe robbyng and robbours
And gyle gylyng, and gylours
By my treget, I gather and thrift
The great treſour in to my cheſte
That lyeth wyth me ſo faſte bounde
Wyne hygh paleys do I founde
And my delytes I fulfyll
Wyth wyne at feeſtes, at my wyll
And tables full of entremees
I woll no lyfe, but eaſe and pees
And wynne golde to ſpende alſo
For whan the great bagge is go
It cometh eyght with my tapes
Make I not well tomble myne apes
To wynnen is alway myne entent
My purchace is better than my rent
For though I ſhulde beten be
Ouer all I entremet me
Without me may no wight dure
I walke ſoules for to cure
Of all the worlde cure haue I
In brede and length boldly
I woll bothe preche, and eke counſaylen
Wyth hondes wyll I not trauaylen
For of the Pope I haue the bull
I ne holde not my wyttes dull
I woll not ſtynten in my lyue
Theſe Emperours for to ſhryue
Of kynges, dukes, and lordes grete
But poore folke all quyte I lete
I loue no ſuche ſhryuyng parde
But it for other cauſe be
I recke not of poore men
Her eſtate is not worthe an hen
Where fyndeſt thou a ſwynker of labor
Haue me vnto hys confeſſour
But Empreſſes, and duchelles
Theſe quenes, and eke counteſſes
Theſe abeſſes, and eke bygyns
Theſe great ladyes palaſyns
Theſe iolye knyghtes, and baylifes
Theſe nonnes, and theſe burgeys wyues
That ryche ben, and eke pleſyng
And theſe maydens welfarying
Where ſo they clad or naked be
Uncounſayled gothe there none fro me
And for her ſoules ſaluete
At lorde and lady, and her meyne
I aſke, whan they hem to me ſhriue
The propicte of all her lyue
And make hem trowe, bothe moſte and leeſt
Her paryſhe preeſt nys but a beeſt
Ayens me and my company
That ſhrewes ben, as great as I)
For whyche I woll not hyde in holde
No pryuite that me is tolde
That I by worde or ſigne ywis
Ne woll make hem knowe what it is
And they wollen alſo tellen me
They hele fro me no pryuite
And for to make you hem perceyuen
That vſen folke thus to diſceyuen
I woll you ſayne wythouten drede

what

Whan menne maye in the Gospell rede
Of Sayne Mathue the gospelere
That sayethe, as I shall you saye here.

Vpon the chayre of Moyses
Thus it is glosed doutelees
(That is the olde Testament
For therby is the chayre ment)
Sytte Scribes and Pharysen
That is to sayne, the cursed men
Whyche that we hypocrites call
Dothe that they preche I rede you all
But dothe nat as they done a deie
That bene nat werry to saye weie
But to do well, no wyll haue they
And they wolde bynde on folke alwaye
That bene to begyled able
Burdons that ben importable
On folkes shulders thynges they couchen
That they nyll wyth her fyngers touchen
And why woll they nat touche it why?
For hem ne lyste nat sykerly
For sadde burdons that men taken
Make folkes shulders aken
And yf they do ought that good be
That is for folke it shulde se
Her burdons larger maken they
And make her hemmes wyde alwaye
And louen seates at the table
The fyrste, and most honorable
And for to hanne the fyrste chayris
In synagogges, to hem full dere is
And wyllen that folke hem loute and grete
Whan that they passen through the strete
And wollen be cleped mayster also
But they ne shulde nat wyilen so
The gospell is there agaynst I gesse
That sheweth well her wyckednesse.

Another custome vse we
Of hem that wol aynst vsbe
we hate hi deedly euerichone
& we wol werrey him, as one
hym ꝑ one hateth, hate we al
And coiecte, how to done him
And yf we sene hym wynne honour (sal
Rychesse or preyse, through hys valour
Prouende, rente, or dignyte
Full faste ywis compassen we
By what ladder he is clomben so
And for to maken hym downe to go
With trayson we woll hym defame
And done hym lese hys good name
Thus from hys ladder we hym take
And thus hys frendes foes we make
But worde ne wete shall he noon
Tyll all hys frendes bene hys foon
For yf we dyd it openly
we myght haue blame reddily
For hadde he wyste of our malyce
He hadde hym kepte, but he were nyce.

Another is thys, that yf ich fall
That ther be one amonge vs al
That doth a good tourne, out
of drede
We sayne it is our alder dede
Ye sikerly, though he it fained
Or that hym lyste, or that hym dayned
I manne through hym auaunced be
Therof all parceners be we
And tellen folke, where so we go
That manne through vs is sprongen so
And for to haue of menne preysyng
we purchace through our flatterynge
Of ryche menne of great poste
Letters, to wytnesse our bounte
So that manne weneth that maye vs se
That all vertue in vs be
And alwaye poore we vs fayne
But howe so that we begge or playne
we bene the folke without leasyng
That all thynge haue without hauyng
Thus be we dradde of the people ywis
And gladly my purpose is thys.
I deale wyth no wyght, but he
Haue golde and treasour great plente
Her acqueyntaunce well loue I
Thys is moche my desyre shortely
I entremete me of brocages
I make peace, and mariages
I am gladly executour
And many tymes a procuratour
I am somtyme messagere
That falseth nat to my mystere
And many tymes I make enquestes
For me that offyce is nat honest
To deale with other mennes thynge
That is to me a great lykynge
And yf that ye haue ought to do
In place that I repeyre to
I shall it speden through my wyt
As soone as ye haue tolde me it
So that ye serue me to paye

My seruyce

My ſeruyce ſhalbe yours alwaye
But who ſo wol chaſtyce me
Anone my loue loſt hath he
For I loue no man in no gyſe
That wol me repreue, or chaſtyce
But I woſde al folke vnderfake
And of no wyght no teachyng take
For I that other folke chaſty
wol not be taught fro my foly

I Loue none Hermytage more
Al deſertes, and holtes hoore
And greate woodes euerychone
I Let them to the Baptiſte Iohn
I queth hym quyte and hym releſſe
Of Egypte al the wyldernesſe
To ſette were al my manſions
Fro al cities and good towns
My paleys and myne houſe make I
There menne may renne in openly
And ſaye that I the worlde forſake
But al amydde I bylde and make
My houſe, and ſwymme and playe therinne
Bette than a fyſhe doth wyth hys fynne.

Of Antechriſtes menne am I
Of whiche that Chriſte ſayeth openly
They haue habyte of holynesſe
And lyuen in ſuch wyckednesſe
To the copye, yf hym talent toke
Of the Euangeliſtes boke
Ther myght he ſe by great trayſon
Ful many falſe comparyſon
As moche as though hys greate myght
Be it of heate or of lyght
The ſunne ſurmounteth the moone
That troubler is, and chaungeth ſoone
And the nutte kynel the ſhelle
I ſkorne not that I you telle
Ryght ſo wythouten any gyle
Surmounteth thys noble Euangyle
The worde of any Euangeliſt
And to her tytel they token Chriſt
And many ſuch comparyſoun
Of whyche I make no mencioun
Wyght men in that booke fynde
who ſo couſde of hem haue mynde.

The vniuerſyte that tho was aſlepe
Gan for to brayde, and taken kepe
And at the noyſe, the heed vp caſt
Ne neuer ſythen ſlepte it faſt
But vp it ſterte, and armes tooke
Ayenſt thys falſe horrible booke
All redy batayle for to make
And to the iuge the boke they take
But they that broughten the boke there
Hent it anone away for fere
They nolde the we it no more a dele
But than it kepte, and kepen wele
Tyl ſuch a tyme that they may ſe
That they ſo ſtronge worken be
That no wyght maye hem wel wythſtonde
For by that boke they durſt nat ſtonde
Awaye they gonne it for to bere
For they ne durſt nat anſwere
By expoſitioun no gloſe
To that that clerkes wol appoſe
Ayenſt the curſednesſe ywys
That in that boke wryten is
Now wotte I nat, ne I can nat ſe
what maner ende that there ſhall be
Of al thys that they hyde
But yet algate they ſhal abyde
Tyl that they may it bette defende
Thys trowe I beſt woll be her ende.

Thus Antechriſt abyden we
For we bene al of hys meyne
And what man that wol not be ſo
Ryght ſoone he ſhal hys lyfe forgo
Outwarde Lambren ſemen we
Ful of goodneſſe and of pyte
And inwarde we wythouten fable
Bene gredy wolues rauyſable
we enuyroun both lande and ſee
wyth al the worlde werryen we
we wol ordayne of al thyng
Of folkes good, and her lyuyng.

If there be caſtel or cytye
wherin that any bougerons be
Al though that they of Pyllayne were
For therof bene they blamed there
Or yf a wyght out of meaſure
wolde leene her golde, and take vſure
For that he is ſo couetous
Or yf he be to lecherous
Or theſe that haunten Simonye
Or prouoſt ful of trechery
Or Prelate lyuyng ſolyly
Or preeſt that halte hys queyn hym by

Or olde hoores hostyers
Or other bandes or bordeliers
Or els blamed of any vyce
Of whyche men shulden done iustyce
By al the sayntes that we pray
But they defende them wyth lampray
wyth luce, wyth elys, wyth samons
wyth tendre gees, and with capons
wyth tartes, or wyth chelles fatte
wyth deyntye flaunes, blode and flatte
wyth caleweys, or wyth pullayle
wyth conynges, or fyne vytayle
That we vnder our clothes wyde
Waken through our goiet glyde
Or but he wol do come in haste
Roe benyson bake in paste
whether so that he loure or groyne
He shal haue of a colde a loygne
wyth whiche men shal hym bynde and lede
To brenne hym for hys synful dede
That men shulde here hym crye and roze
A myle waye aboute and moze
Or els he shal in prison dye
But yf he wol hys frendshyp bye
Or smerten that, that he hath do
Moze than hys gylte amounteth to
But and he couth, through hys sleyght
Do make vp a toure of heyght
Nought rought I, whether of stone or tre
Or erth, or turues though it be
Though it were of no bounde stone
wrought wyth squyre and scantilone
So that the toure were stuffed wel
wyth al rychesse temporel
And than that he wolde vp dresse
Engyns, both moze and lesse
To cast at vs by euery syde
To bere hys good name wyde
Such sleyghtes I shal you neuen
Barels of wyne, by tyre or seuen
Or golde in sackes greate plente
He shulde sone delyuered be
And yf he haue no such pytences
Let hym study in equipolences
And let lyes, and fallaces
If that he wolde destrue our graces
Or we shal beare hym such wytnesse
Of shame, and of hys wretchednesse
As done hys lose so wyde renne
That al quicke we shulde hym brenne
Or els yeue hym such penaunce
That is wel worse than the pytaunce
For thou shalt neuer for nothyng
Con knowen a tryght by her clothyng
The traitours ful of trecherye
But thou her werkes can aspye
And ne had the good keeping be
wholom of the vniuersite
That kepeth the key of christendome
we had bene turmented al and some
Such bene the shrinking prophetis
Ays none of hem, that good prophete is
For they through wycked entention
The pere of the incarnation
A thousande, and two hundred pere
Fyue and fyfty, ferther ne nere
Broughten a boke, wyth foly grace
To yeue ensample in comune place
That sayd thus, though it were fable
Thys is the gospel pardurable
That fro the holy ghost is sent
wel were it worth to bene brent
Entytled was in such manere
Thys boke of whyche I tel here
There nas no wyght in al Parys
Before our lady at pary s
That they ne myght the booke by
The sentence pleased hem well trewly.
But I wol shyte of thys matere
For it is wonder longe to here
But had that vile boke endured
Of better estate I were ensured
And frendes haue I yet parde
That han me set in great degre

Of al thys worlde is Emperour
Gyle my father, the trechour
And Empresse my mother is
Maugre the holy ghost y'wys
Our myghty lynage, and our route
Reygneth in euery reygne aboute
And wel is worthy we mynystres be
For al thys worlde gouerne we
And can the folke so wel disceyue
That none our gyle can perceyue
And though they done, they dare not say
The soth dare no wyght bewray
But de in Christes wrath hym ledeth
That more than Christ my brethern dredeth
He nys no ful good champion
That dredeth such simulacion
Nor that for payne wol refusen
Vs to correcte and accusen
He wol not entremete by tryght

Ne haue god in hys eye syght
And therfore shal god hym punyce
But me ne recketh of no vyce
Sythen men vs louen communably
And holden vs for so worthy
That we may folke reprieue echone
And we nyl haue reprefe of none
whom shulden folke worshypen so
But vs that stynten neuer mo
To patren, whyle that folke may vs se
Though it not so behynde hem be.

AND where is more woode foly
Than to enhaunce chiualry
And loue noble men and gaye
That yolv clothes weren alwaye
If they be such folke as they semen
So clene, as men her clothes demen
And that her workes folowe her dede
It is great pyte out of drede
For they wol be none hypocrites
Of hem me thynketh great spyte is
I can not loue hem on no syde
But beggers wyth these hoodes wyde
wyth sleygh and pale faces leane
And graye clothes nat ful cleane
But fretted ful of tatarwagges
And hygh shoes knopped wyth daggys
That trouncen lyke a quayle pype
Or bootes ryuelyng as a gype
To such folke, as I you deuyse
Shulde princes and these lordes wyse
Take al her landes and her thynges
Both warre and peace in gouernynges
To such folke shulde a prince hym yeue
That wolde hys lyfe in honour leue

And yf they be nat as they seme
That semen thus the worlde to queme
There wolde I dwelle to deceyue
The folke, for they shal not parceyue
But I ne speke in no suche wyse
That men shulde humble habyte dispyse
So that no pride there vnder be
No man shulde hate, as thynketh me
The poore man in such clothyng
But god ne preyseth hym nothyng
That sayeth he hath the worlde forsake
And hath to worldly glory hym take
And wol of such delyces vse
who maye that begger wel excuse
That papelarde, that hym yeldeth so
And wol to worldly ease go
And sayth that he the worlde hath lefte
And gredyly it grypeth efte
He is the hounde, shame is to sayne
That to hys casting goth agayne

BVt vnto you dare I not lye
But myght I felen or espye
That ye perceyued it nothyng
Ye shulde haue a starke leasyng
Ryght in your hande thus to begynne
I nolde it let for no synne
The god loughe at the wonder tho
And euery wyght gane laughe also
And sayd: Lo here a man aryght
For to be trusty to euery wyght.

FAlse semblant (q Loue) saye to me
Sythe I thus haue auaunced the
That in my courte is thy dwellyng
And of rybaudes shalt be my kyng
wolte thou wel holden my forwardes
Yee sir, from hence forwardes
we wol people vpon hym areyse
And through out gyle, done hym deyse
And hym on sharpe speares tyue
Or other waves bringe hym fro lyue
But yf that he wol folowe ywys
That in our boke wutten is

THus muche wol our boke signifye
That whyle Peter hath mastrye
Haye neuer Iohn shewe wel hys myght
Nowe haue I you declared tyght
The meanyng of the barke and tynde
That maketh the ententions blynde
But nowe at erst I wol be gyn
To expowne you the pythe wythin
And the seculers comprehende
That Christes lawe wol defende
And shulde it kepen and mayntenen
Arenst hem that al fusteynen
And falsly to the people teachen
That Iohan betoketh hem to prechen
That there hys lawe couenable
But thylke gospell pardurable

That fro the holy ghoſt was ſent
To turne folke that bene myſwent

The ſtrength of Iohan they vnderſtonde
The grace in whych they ſay they ſtonde
That doth the ſynful folke conuerte
And hem to Ieſu Chriſt reuerte
Ful many an other horrible
Wayе men in that boode ſe
That bene commaunded doutelleſſe
Ayenſt the lawe of Rome expreſſe
And al wyth Antechriſt they holden
As men may in the boke beholden
And than commaunden they to fleen
Al tho that wyth Peter been
But they ſhall neuer haue that myght
And god to ſome, for ſtryfe to fyght
That they ne ſhal ynough fynde
That Peters lawe ſhal haue in mynde
And euer beholde, and ſo maynteine
That at the laſt it ſhal be ſene
That they ſhall al come therto
For aught that they can ſpeke or do
And thylke lawe ſhal not ſtonde
That they by Ihon haue vnderſtonde
But maugre hem, it ſhal doun
And hem brought to confuſioun
Had neuer your father here before
Sermount ſo trewe, ſyth he was borne
That is ayenſt al nature
Sir, put you that in aduenture
For though ye borowes take of me
The ſykerer ſhal ye neuer be
For hoſtages, ne ſykernelle
Or charters for to bere wytnelle
I take your ſelfe to recorde here
That men ne maye in no maniere
Teren the wolfe out of hys hyde
Tyl he be ſlayne, backe and ſyde
Though men hym beate and al defyle
what were ye that I wol begyle
For I am clothed meekely
There vnder is al my trechery
Wyne hert chaungeth neuer the mo
For none habyt, in whych I go
Though I haue chere of ſimpleneſſe
I am not werry of ſhrewdneſſe
My lemman, ſtrayned abſtenaunce
Hath miſter of my purueyaunce
She had ful longe ago be dede
Nere my counſayle and my rede
Let her alone, and you and me

And loue anſwerde, I truſt the
wythout borowe, for I woll none
And falſe ſemblaunt the theſe anone
Ryght in that ylke ſame place
That had of treſon al his face
Ryght blacke wythin, and whyte wythout
Thankyng hym, gan on hys knees lout

Than was there nought, but euerye man
Nowe to aſſaute, that ſayen can
(Quod Loue) and that ful hardely
Than armed they hem comenly
Of ſuch armoure, as to hem fell
whan they were armed, fyers and fel
They went hem forth al in aroute
And ſet the caſtel al aboute
They wyl not away for no drede
Tyl it ſo be that they bene dede
Or tyl they haue the caſtel take
And foure bateis they gan make
And partid hem in foure anone
And toke her way, and forth they gone
The foure gates for to aſſayle
Of wheych the kepers woll not fayle
For they bene neyther ſycke ne dede
But hardy folke, and ſtronge in dede

Nowe wol I ſayne the countenaunce
Of falſe ſemblaunt, and abſtinaunce
That bene to wycked tonge went
But fyrſt they helde her parlyment
whether it to done were
To maken hem knowen there
Or els walken forth dyſgyſed
But at the laſte they deuyſed
That they wolde gone in tappynage
As it were in a pylgrymage
Lyke good and holy folke buſeyned
And dame abſtinence ſtreyned
Toke on a robe of cameline
And gan her gratche as a bygyne
A large couerchefe of thriede
She wrapped al about her hede
But ſhe forgate not her pſaltere
A payre of beedes eke ſhe bere
Upon a lace al of whyte thriede
On whych that ſhe her beades bede
But ſhe ne bought hem neuer a deie
For they were gyuen her, I wote weie
God wote of a ful holy frere
That ſayd he was her father dere
To whom ſhe had often went

Than

Than any frere of hys couent
And he vysited her also
And many a sermon sayd her to
He nolde let for man on lyue
That he ne wolde her ofte shryue
And with so great deuocion
They made her confession
That they had ofte for the nones
Two herdes in one hode at ones
Of fayre shappe, I deuysed her the
But pale of face somtyme was she
That false traytouresse vntrewe
was lyke that salowe horse of hewe
That in the Apocalips is shewed
That signifyeth to folke beshewed
That bene al ful of trecherye
And pale, through hypocrisye
For on that horse no colour is
But onely deed and pale ywys
Of such a colour enlangoured
was abstinence ywys coloured
Of her estate she her repented
As her vysage represented
She had a burdowne al of theffte
That gyle had yeue her of hys yefte
And a scryppe of faynte dissemblance
That ful was of contrarietee
And forth she walked sobrely
And false semblaunt saynt, le vous die
And as it were for such mistere
Done on the cope of a frere
With chere symple, and full pytous
Hys lokyng was not disdeynous
Ne proude, but meke and ful pesyble
About hys necke he bare a Byble
And squierly, forth gan he gon
And for to rest hys lymmes vpon
He had of treasen a potent
As he were feble, hys way he went
But in hys sleue he gan to thryng
A rasoure sharpe, and wel bytyng
That was forged in a forge
whyche that men clepen Coupe Gorge
So longe forth her waye they nomen
Tyl they to wycked tonge comen
That at hys gate was syttyng
And sawe folke in the way passyng
The pylgrymes sawe he faste by
That beren hem ful mekely
And humbly they with hym mette
Dame abstinence fyrst hym grette
And syth hym false semblant salued
And he hem, but he not remeued
For he ne dred hem not a dele
For whan he sawe her faces wele
Alwaye in herte, hym thought so
He shulde knowe hem both two
For wele he knewe dame abstynaunce
But he ne knewe not Constreynaunce
He ne knewe nat that she was constreyned
Ne of her theues lyfe fayned
But wende she come of wyll al fre
But she come in another degre
And yf of good wyl she beganne
That wyl was fayled her thanne.

And false semblant had he fayne alse
But he knewe nat that he was false
Yet false was he, but his falsenesse (nesse
Ne couthe he not espye, nor gesse
For semblant was so slye wrought
That falsenesse he ne espyed nought
But haddest thou knowen hym beforne
Thou woldest on a ok haue swore
whan thou hym sawgh in thylke araye
That he that whylome was so gaye
And of the daunce Joly Robyn
was tho become a Jacobyn
But sothly what so men hym call
Frere preachours bene good men all
Her order wyckedly they beren
Such ministrels, yf they weren
So bene Augustyns, and Cordyliers
And Carmes, and eke sacked freers
And al freres shodde and bare
Though some of hem bene great and square
Ful holy men, as I hem deme
Euerych of hem wolde good man seme
But shalt thou neuer of apparence
Bene conclude good consequence
In none argument ywys
If existence all fayled is
For men may fynde alwaye sopheme
The consequence to euereme
who so that hath had the subtelte
The double sentence for to se.

whan the pylgrymes comen were
To wycked tonge that dwelled there
Her harneys nygh hem was algate
By wycked tonge adowne they sate
That badde hem nere hym for to come

And of tidynges telle hym some
And sayde hem: what cause maketh you
To come to this place nowe:

Sir sayde Straynyer Welcome
we for to deye our penaunce
with herters pyteous denoute
Are cõmen, as pylgrimes gon aboute
wel nyght on fote alway we go
Ful doughty ben our herles two
And thus bothe we ben sent
Throughoute this worlde that is myswent
To yeue ensample, and preche also
To lythen synfull menne we go
For other lythynge, ne lythe we
And syr, for that charite
As we be wont, herborowe we craue
Your lyfe to amende Theiil it saue
And so it shulde you nat displeasse
we wolden, yf it were your ease
A shorte sermon vnto you sayne
And wicked tonge and wered agayne
The house (quod he) such (as ye se)
Shal not be warned you for me
Say what you lyst, and I wol here
Graunt mercy swete syr dere.

(Quod alder first) dame sobrenesse
And thus began she her sentence
Sir the fyrst vertue certayne
The greatest and moost souerayne
That may be founde in any man
For hauyng, or for wytte he can
That is hys tonge to refrayne
Therto ought euery wyght hym payne
For it is better styl be
Than for to speken harme parde
And he that herkeneth it gladly
He is no good man sykerly
And sir, abouen al other synne
In that arte thou nwost gylty inne
Thou spake a tape, not longe ago
And sir, that was ryght yuel do
Of a yonge man, that here repayred
And neuer yet thys place apayred
Thou saydest he awayted nothynge
But to deceyue fayre welcomyng
Ye sayd nothyng soth of that
But sir, ye lye, I tel you plat
He ne cometh no more, ne goeth parde
I trowe ye shal hym neuer se
Fayre welcomynge in prison is
That ofte hath played wyth you er thys
The fayrest games that he couthe
wythout fyght styl or loude
Nowe dare he not her selfe solace
ye han also the man to chace
That he dare neyther come ne go
what meueth you to hate hym so
But properly your wycked thought
That many a falle leasyng hath thought
That meueth youre foole eloquence
That iangleth euer in audience
And on the folke greyseth blame
And doth hem dishonour and shame
For thyng that maye haue no preuyng
But lyberynesse, and contrayuyng.

For I dare sayne, that reason demeth
It is not al soth thynge that semeth
And it is synne to controue
Thyng that is to reproue
Thys wote ye wele, and syr therfore
Ye arne to blame the more
And nathelesse, he recheth lyte
He peyeth nat nowe therof a myte
For yf he thought harme parfaye
He wolde come and gone al daye
He couthe him selfe not absteine
Nowe cometh he not, and that is sene
For he ne taketh of it no cure
But yf it be through auenture
And lasse than other folke algate
And thou her watchest at the gate
wyth speare in thyne arest alwaye
There muste musarde al the daye
Thou wakest nyght and daye for thought
I wys thy trauayle is for nought
And Ielosy wythouten fayle
Shal neuer quyte the thy trauayle
And sooth is, that fayre welcomyng
wythout any trespassyng
Shal wrongfully in prison be
There weepeth and languysheth he
And though thou neuer yet y wys
Agyltest man no more but thys
Take not a greefe it were worthy
To put the out of thys heyly
And afterwarde in prison lye
And fetter the tyl that thou dye
For thou shalt for thys synne dwelle
Nyght in the dyuels arse of helle
But yf that thou repent the

Malaye

Malaye, thou lyest falsely (quod he)
what, welcome with mischaunce now
Haue I therfore herbered you
To saye me shame, and eke reprove
with sory hap to your behove
Am I today your harbegere
Go herber you els where, than here
That han a lyer called me
Two tregetours art thou and he
That in myne house, do me this shame
And for my sothe sawe ye me blame
Is this the sermon that ye make
To all the deuyls I me take
Or els god thou me confounde
But er men bydden this castell founde
It passeth not ten dayes or twelue
But it was tolde eyght to my selue
And as they sayd, eyght so tolde I
He kyst the rose prively
Thus sayd I now, and haue sayd yore
I not where he dyd any more
why shulde men saye me such a thynge
Yf it had ben gabbynge
Eyght so sayd I, and woll say yet
I trowe I lyed not of it
And with my bemes I woll blowe
To all neyghbours arowe
How he hath both comen and gone
Tho spake false semblaunt eyght anon
All is not gospell out of dout
That men sayne in the towne about
Lay no dede ere to my speakyng
I swere you syr, it is gabbyng
I trowe ye wot well certaynly
That no man loueth hym tenderly
That sayth hym harme, yf he wote it
Ill be he neuer so poore of wyt
And sothe is also sykerly
This knowe ye syr, as well as I
That louers gladly woll wysten
The places there her loues habyten
This man you loueth, and eke honoureth
This man to serue you laboureth
And clepeth you his frende so dere
And this man maketh you good chere
And euery where that you meteth
He you salweth, and he you greteth
He preseth not so oft as ye
Ought of his commyng encombred be
There presen other folke on you
Full ofter than he doth nowe
And yf his hert hym strayned so
Under the Rose for to go
Ye shulde hym sene so oft nede
That ye shulde take hym with the dede
He coude his commyng not forbeare
Though he hym thrilled with a speare
It nere nat than, as it is nowe
But trusteth well, I swere it you
That it is clene out of his thought
Syr, certes he ne thynketh it nought
Nomore ne doth fayre welcomyng
That sore abyeth all this thynge
And yf they were of one assent
Full soone were the Rose hent
The maugre yours wolde be
And syr of o thyng herkeneth me
Syth ye this man, that loueth you
Han sayd suche harme, and shame now
wytteth well, yf he gessed it
Ye maye well demen in your wyt
He noulde nothynge loue you so
Ne callen you his frende also
But nyght and daye he wol wake
The castel to destroye and take
Yf it were soth as ye deuyse
Or some man in some maner wyse
Wyght it warne hym euery dele
Or by hym self perceyue wele
For syth he myght not come and gone
As he was whylom wont to done
He myght it soone wyte and se
But nowe all otherwyse wot he
Than haue we syr all vtterly
Deserued hell, and iolyly
The deth of hell doutelesse
That thralleth folke so gyltelesse



Alse semblaunte so prouerth this thynge
That he canne none answerynge
And seeth alwaye, suche apparaunce
That nygh he fell in repentaunce
And sayd hym, syr it maye well be
Semblaunt, a good man semen ye
And Abstinence, full wyse ye seme
Of o talent you both I deme
what counsayle woll ye to me yeuen
Eyght here anon thou shalt be shryuen
And say thy synne, without more
Of this shalt thou repent sore

For I am prest, and haue pesse
To shryue lasse of moost highnesse
That hem nys wyght as mouthe may bere
Of al this worlde I haue the cure
And chief hede nouht yet perfourn
Ne bicause of no maner tourn
And god wot I haue of the
I thoughtfulle rymes more pyece
Than hath thy preest parochial
Though thy shrifte be speyall
I haue auauntage in o wyse
That youre pryuetes ben not so wyse
Ne halfe so lettred (as am I)
I am lycenced boldly

In diuinitie for to rede
And to confessen out of drede
yf ye woll you nothe confesse
And leaue your synnes more and lesse
Without shode, lucie be mote amen
And you shall haue absolucion.

FINIS.

Here endeth the Romaunt of the Rose: And here followeth the bothe of Troylous and Creseyde.

¶ Troylus and Creſeyde,

THe double ſorowe of Troilus to tellen
That was kynge Priamus ſonne of Troy
In louyng, how his aduentures fellen
From wo to wele, and after out of ioye
My purpoſe is, er that I parte froye
Thou Thesiphon thou helpe me for tendite
Theſe woful verſes, that wepen as I write

To the I clepe, thou goddeſſe of tourment
Thou cruel furye, ſorowyng euer in payne
Helpe me that am the ſorowful inſtrument
That helpeth louers, as I can complayne
For well ſyt it, the ſoth for to ſayne
A woful wyght to haue a dreri fere
And to a ſorowful tale a ſorye chere

For I that god of loues ſeruauntes ſerue
Ne dare to loue, for myne vnlykelyneſſe
Prayen for ſpede, al ſhulde I therfore ſterue
So farre am I fro his helpe in derkeneſſe
But natheleſſe, if this may done gladneſſe
To any louer, and his cauſe aueyle
Haue he my thanke, and myne be the trauyle

But ye louers that bathen in gladneſſe
Yf any drope of pyte in you be
Remembreth you of paſſed heuyneſſe
That ye haue felte, and on the aduerſitie
Of other folke, and thynketh how that ye
Han felt that loue durſt you diſpleaſe
Or ye han won hym with to great an eaſe

And prayeth for hem that ben in the caſe
Of Troylus, as ye may after heare
That he hem bringe in heuen to ſolace
And eke for me prayeth to god ſo dere
That I haue might to ſhew in ſom manere
Such payne and wo, as loues folke endure
In Troylus vnlyke aduenture.

And byddeth eke for hem yͤ ben diſpeyred
In loue, that neuer wyl recouered be
And eke for hem that falſely ben apeyred
Through wycked tonges, be it he or ſhe
Thus byddeth god for his benignite
So graūt hem ſone out of this world to pace
That ben diſpayred out of loues grace.

And byddeth eke for hem that bene at eaſe
That God hem graūt aye good perſeueraūce
And ſende hem grace her loues for to pleaſe
That it to loue be worſhyp and pleſaunce
For ſo hope I my ſelfe beſt to auaunce
To praye for hem yͤ loues ſeruauntes be
And wryte her wo, and lyue in charite

And for to haue of hem compaſſyoun
As though I were her owne brother dere
Now herkeneth with a good entencioun
For now wyll I go ſtreyght to my matere
In which ye may the double ſorowes here
Of Troylus, in louyng of Creſeyde
And how that ſhe forſoke hym er yͤ ſhe dyed.

IT is well wyſt, how that the Grekes ſtronge
In armes with a thouſande ſhyppes went
To Troye wardes, and the cytie longe
Beſiegeden nygh ten yeres er they ſtent
And in dyuers wyſe, and one entent
The rauyſhyng to wreke of quene Heleyne
By Parys don, they wroughte al her peyne.

Now fell it ſo, that in yͤ towne there was
Dwellyng a Lorde of great authorite
A great diuyne that cleped was Calcas
That in that ſcience ſo expert was, that he
Knewe wel that Troye ſhulde deſtroyed be
By anſwere of his god that hyght thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus

So whā this Calcas knewe by calculing
And eke by the anſwere of this god Apollo
That grekes ſhulde ſuch a people bring
Through wo which that Troye muſt be forſo
He caſt anon out of the towne to go
For wel he wyſt by ſort, that Troye ſholde
Deſtroyed be, yea wolde who ſo nolde.

wher

wherfore to departen softely
Toke purpose ful this for knowyng wyle
And to the Grekes host full priuyly
He stale anon, and they in curteys wyle
Dyd hym both worshyp and seruyce
In trust that he hath comyng hem to rede
In euery peryll, which that was to drede.

Great rumour rose whā it was fyrst espyred
In all the towne, and openly was spoken
That Calcas traytour fled was and ayred
To hem of Grece, & cast was to be wroken
On hym, that falsly hath his fayth broken
And sayd: he and all his kynne at ones
were worthy to be brent both fel & bones.

Now had Calcas lefte in this mischaūce
Un wyst of this false and wycked dede
A doughter, whiche was in great penaunce
And of her lyfe she was ful sore in drede
And wyst neuer what best was to rede
And as a wyddowe was she, and al alone
And nyst to whō she myght make her mone.

Creseyde was this ladyes name aryght
As to my dome, in al Troyes cytie
Most fayrest lady, fer passynge euery wyght
So aungelyke shone her natyf beautie
That no mortall thyng semed she
And therwith was she so partyte a creature
As she had be made in scornyng of nature

This lady that all daye herde at eare
Her fathers shame falsed, and traysoun
(Full nygh out of her wit for sorowe & feare
In wedowes habite large of samite browen)
Before Hector on knees she fyl adowne
Her mercy bad her selfe excusyng
with pitious voyce, & tenderly weppynge

Now was this Hector pytious of nature
And sawe, that she was sorowful begone
And that she was so fayre a creature
Of his goodnesse he gladded her anon
And sayd: let your fathers trayson gone
Forthy by mischaūce, & ye your selfe in ioye
Dwelleth with vs, whyle you lyst in Troye

Now all ye honours ye men may do you haue
As ferforth as though your father dwelt here
Your self shall haue, and your body shall men saue
Fro fere as I may aught enquyre and here
And she him thāked with ful humble chere
And after wolde and it had ben his wyll
Toke her leaue, went home, & held her styll.

And in her house she abode wt suche meyny
As tyll her honour nede was to holde
And whyle she was dwellyng in that cytie
She kept her estate, & of ponge and olde
Full welbeloued, and well men of her tolde
But whether that she children had or none
I rede it nat, therfore I let it gone

¶ The thynges fellen as they done of werre
Betwyxen hem of Troye and grekes ofte
For som day bought they of Troye it derre
And eft the grekes founden nothyng softe
The folke of Troye: & thus Fortune alofte
And vnder eft gan hem to whelmen both
After her course, aye whyle that they were
(wroth

But how this towne came to destruction
Ne falleth not to purpose me to tell
For it were a longe digressyon
Fro my matter, and you to longe to dwell
But the Troyan gestes, as they fell
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dyte
who so y can, may reden hem as they wryte

But though y grekes hem of Troy shetten
And her cytye beseged all about
Her olde vsages nolde they not letten
As to honouren her goddes full deuoute
But aldermost in honour out of doute
They had a relyke hyght Palladion
That was her trust aboue euery chon

And so befyll whan cōmen was the tyme
Of April, whan clothed is the mede
with newe grene, of lusty hewe the pryme
And swete smellyng floures whyte and red
In sondry wyse shewed as I rede
The folke of Troy, theyr olde customes olde
Palladions fest went for to holde

Unto the temple in all theyr best wyse
Generallye there went many a wyght
To herken of Palladions seruyce
And namely many a lusty knyght
And many a lady fresh, and mayden bright
Full wele atyred both most and leest
Both for the season and the hye fest.

Amonge

Amonge these other folke was Creseyda
In wydowes habyt blacke: but nathelesse
Right as our fyrst letter is nowe an A
In beautie fyrst so stode she nathelesse
Her goodly lokyng gladded all the pres
Ne neuer lene thyng to be preysed derre
Ne vnder cloude blacke so bryght a sterre.

As was Creseyd, they sayden everychone
That her beheelde in her blacke wede
And yet she stode full lowe and styl alone
Behynde other folke in lytle stede
And nye the dore vnder shames drede
Symple of attyre, and debonayre of chere
With full assured lokyng and manere

This Troylus, as he was wont to gyrde
His ronge knyghtes lad hem vp and downe
In thylke large temple on euery syde
Beholdyng ave the ladyes of the towne
Now here now there, for no deuocioun
Had he to none, to reuen hym his rest
But gamne to playse and lacke whom hym lest.

And in his walke ful fast he gan to wayten
If knyght or squyre of his companye
Gan for to syke, or let his eyen bayten
On any woman, that he coude espye
He wolde smyle, and holde it a folye
And saye hem thus: O Lord the slepeth soft
For loue of the whan thou turnest full ofte.

I haue herde tel pardieux of your lyuynge
Ye louers, and eke your lewde obseruaunces
And which a labour folke haue in wynnyng
Of loue, and in keppynge suche dountaunces
And whā your play is lost, wo and penaūces
O hery fooles, blynde and nyce be ye
There is not one can wete by another be

And with that worde he gan cast vp the browe
Alas (quod he) is this not well ysposen
Of which the god of loue gan loken rowe
Right for despyte, and shope hym to be wroke
He kyd anon his bowe was nat broken (ken
For sodaynly he hyt hym at the full
And yet as proude a pecocke gan he pull

O blynde worlde, o blynde entencioun
How often falleth all thyffect contrayre
Of surquedie and foule presumcioun
For caught is proude, and caught is debonair
This Troylus is clomben on the stayre
And lytel weneth, that he mote discenden
But al day fayleth that fooles wenden

As proude bayarde begynneth for to skyp
Out of the waye, so pryckyth hym his corne
Tyl he a lash haue of the longe whyppe
Than thynketh he, though I praūce al beforn
Fyrst in the trace, ful fat and newe yshorne
Yet am I but an horse, and horses lawe
I must endure, and with my feeres drawe.

So fared it by this fiers and proud knyght
Though he a worthy kynges sonne were
And wende nothynge had had suche myght
Ayenst his wyl, that shulde his hert stere
Yet with a loke his hert wore on fyre
That he that now was most in pride aboue
Wore sodaynly most subiect vnto loue.

For thy ensample taketh of this man
Ye wyse proude, and worthy folkes all
To scornen loue, which that so sone can
The fredom of your hertes to hym thrall
For euer it was, and euer it be shall
That loue is he that all thyng may bynde
For no man may fordo the lawe of kynde

That this be soth, hath preued, and do. yet
For this (I owe I) ye knowe all and some
Men reden nat that folke han greater wyt
Than they, that han ben most with loue nome
And strongest folke ben therwith ouercome
The worthyest and greatest of degre
This was and is, and yet men shall it se.

And truly eth that sytte well to be so
For alder wyseste han therwith ben plesed
And they that han ben aldermost in wo
With loue han ben comforted most and esed
And oft it hath the cruell hert apesed
And worthy folke made worthyer of name
And causeth moost to dreaden vyce and (shame

Now syth it may not goodly be withstonde
And is a thyng so vertuous in kynde
Refuseth nought to loue, for to ben bonde
Syth as hym selue lyst he may you bynde
The

The perde is bet that bowen woll a wynde
Than that ſ̄ breſt, and therfore I you reed
Nowe folowethe hym, that ſo well can you
(lede

But for to tellen forth in ſpecyall
Of this kynges ſon of whiche I tolde
And leuen other thyng all atterall
Of hym thynke I my tale forth to holde
Both of his ioye, and of his cares colde
And his werke as touchyng this matere
For I it gan, I wol therto refere

Within the tẽple he went him forth playȝ
This Troylus, of euery wyght about
On this lady, and now on that lokyng
Where ſo ſhe were of towne, or of without
And vpon caſe befell, that through a rout
His eye perced, and ſo depe it went
Tyll on Creſeyde it ſmote, and there it ſtent

And ſodaynly for wonder were aſtoned
And gan her bet beholde in thyſtry wyſe
O very god thought he, wher haſt thou wonned
That art ſo fayre, and goodly to deuyſe
Therwith his hert gan to ſpredde and ryſe
And ſoft ſyghed leſt men myght hym here
And caught ayen his fyrſt playing chere.

She nas nat with the moſt of her ſtature
But all her lymmes ſo wel anſwering
Were to womanhode, that creature
was neuer laſſe mannyſh in ſemyng
And eke the pure wyſe of her meanyng
Shewed wel, that men myght in her geſſe
Honour, eſtate, and womanly nobleſſe.

Tho Troylus, ryght wonder wel withall
Gan for to fyke her meanynge and her chere
which ſomdele deignous was, for ſhe let fall
Her loke alyte aſyde, in ſuche manere
Aſkaunces, what may I not ſtonden here
And after that her lokyng gan ſhe lyght
That neuer thought hym ſene ſo good a ſyght

And of her loke to him there gan to quyche
So great deſyre and ſuche affection
That in his hertes botom gan to ſtychen
Of her his fyre and depe impreſſyon
And though he erſt had poyed vp ſ̄ doune
Than was he glad his hornes in to ſtrynke
Vnethes wyſt he how to loke or wynke

Lo, he that lete hym ſelfen ſo conuyng
And ſcorned hem that loues paynes dryen
was full vnwarē ſone had his dwellyng
Within the ſubtil ſtremes of her eyen
That ſodaynly lyth thought he felt dryen
Ryght with her loke, the ſpyrite in his herte
Bleſſed be loue that thus can lothe conuerte

Ne this in blacke lyking to Troylus
Ouer al thyng he ſtode for to beholde
But his deſyre, ne wherfore he ſtode thus
He nyſt nother chere made, ne word tolde
But from a ferre, his maner for to holde
On other thyng ſomtyme his loke he caſt
And eſtte on her, whyle that ſhe ſeruyce laſt

And after this, not fullych all a whaped
Out of the temple all eſtſoone he went
Repentyng hym that he had euer iaped
Of loues folke, leſt fully the deſcent
Of ſcorne fyl on him ſelfe, but what he ment
Leſt it were wyſt on any maner ſyde
His wo he gan diſſimulen and hyde

whan he was fro this tẽple thus departed
He ſtreyght anon vnto his paliays tourneth
Right with her loke, thought ſhorte ſ̄ hasted
Al ſayneth he to luſt that he ſojourneth
And al his chere ſ̄ ſpeche alſo he bourneth
And aye of loues ſeruauntes euery whyle
Hym ſelfe to wyte at hem he gan to ſmyle.

And ſayd lorde, ſo they lyue all in luſt
Ye louers for the comyngeſt of you
That ſerueth moſt entierelyche and beſt
Hym tyte as often harme therof as prowe
Your hyre is quyte ayen, yea god wot how
not wele for wele, but ſtorm for good ſeruice
In fayth your ordre is ruled in good wyſe

In no certayne bene your obſeruaunces
But as a ſely ſewe poyntes be
Ne nothyng a teth ſo gret attendaūces
As doth your laye, and that knowe all ye
But that is not the worſt, as mote I the
But tolde I you the worſt poynt, I leue
All ſayde I ſoth, ye wolden at me greue

But take this, that ye louers oft eſchewe

Or elſ done of good entencion
Full ofte thy lady wol it myſſe conſtrewe
And deme it harme in her opynion
And yet yf ſhe for other encheſon
Be wroth, thá ſhalt thou haue a groin anone
Lorde, wel is him that maye ben of you one

But for al this, whá that he ſeeth his tyme
He held his pees, non other bote him gayned
For loue began his fetheres ſo to lyme
That wel vneth vnto his folke he fayned
That other beſy nedes hym diſtrayned
So wo was hym, that what to done he nyſt
But bad his folke to gon where as hem lyſt

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He downe on his beddes fete hym ſette
And fyrſt he gan to ſyke, and efte to grone
And thought aye on her ſo withouten lette
That as he ſatte and woke, his ſpyrite mette
That he her ſaugh, and temple a all ꝑ wyſe
Right of her loke, and gan it newe auyſe

Thus gá he make a myrrour of his mynde
In whiche he ſaugh al holy her fygure
And that he wel conde in his herte fynde
It was to him a right good auenture
To loue ſuche one, and yf he dyd his cure
To ſeruen her, yet myght he fall in grace
Or elſ, for one of her ſeruauntes pace

Imagynyng, that trauayle nor grame
Ne myght, for ſo goodly one be lorne
Is ſhe, ne hym for his deſyre no ſhame
Al were it wyſt, but in prife and vp borne
Of al louers, wel more than beforne
Thus argumented he, in his gyrnyng
Full vnauyſed of his wo commyng

Thus toke he purpoſe louers crafte to ſewe
And thought he wolde wonnen priuely
Fyrſt to hyde his deſyre in mewe
From euery wight yborne, al ouerly
But he myght aught recouered ben therby
Remédying him, that lone to wyde yblowe
Yelte bytter fruit, though ſwete ſede be ſowe

And ouer al this, ful mokel more he thought
What for to ſpeke, and what to holden inne
And what to arten, her to loue he ſought
And on a ſonge anon right to begynne
And gan loude on his notowe for to wynne
For with good hope, he gan fully aſſente
Creſeyde for to loue, and nought repente

And of his ſonge not onely his ſentence
Is wrutte myne auctour called Lollius
But playnly ſaue our tonges difference
I dare wel ſay, in all that Troylus
Sayd in his ſong, lo euery worde right thus
As I ſhall ſayne, and who ſo lyſte it here
Lo next this verſe, he may it fynde here.

¶ The ſonge of Troylus.

If no loue is, o god what fele I ſo
And yf loue is, what thig and whiche is he
If Loue be good, frome whéce cometh my wo
If it be wycke, a wonder thynketh me
Whan euery turment and aduerſyte
That cometh of him, may to me ſauory thike
For aye thurſt I the more that ych it drinke

And yf that at myne owne luſt I brenne
Frō whéce cometh my wayling & my pleynte
If harme agree me, wherto playn I thenne
I not, ne why, vnwery that I feynte
O quicke dethe, o ſwete harme ſo queynte
How may of the in me, be ſuche quantyte
But yf that I conſente that it ſo be

And yf that I conſente, I wrongfully
Complayne ywis, thus poſſed to and fro
Al ſtereleſſe within a bote am I
Amydde the ſee, atwyxen wyndes two
That in contrarie ſtonden euer mo
Alas, what is thys wonder maladye
For heate of colde, for colde of heate I dye

And to the god of loue thus ſayd he
With pytous boyce, O lorde nowe youre is
Myy ſpyrite, whiche that ought youre be
You thanke I lorde, ꝑ hā me brought to this
But whether goddeſſe or woman ywis
Me be, I not whiche, that ye do me ſerue
But as her man I wol aye lyue and ſterue

Ye ſtonden in her eyen mightyly
As in a place to your bertue digne

Wherfore lorde, yf my seruyce or I
May lyken you, so beth to me benigne
For myne estate royall here I resigne
In to her honde, and with full humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere

In hym ne deigned sparen bloode royall
The fyre of loue, wherfro god me bidde
Ne hym forbate in no degre for all
Hys vertue, or his excellent prowesse
But helde hym as his thrall lowe in distresse
And brende him so in sondrie wyse aye newe
That sixty tymes a day he loste his hewe

So mochel day fro day hys own thought
For lufte to her, gan quicken and increase
That euerych other charge he set at nought
For thy full ofte, hys hotte fyre to cease
To sene her goodly loke he gan to preasse
For therby to ben eased well he wende
And aye the nere he was, the more he brende

For aye the nere the fyre the hotter is
This trowe I knoweth all this compayne
But were he ferre or nere, I dare say thys
By nyght or day, for wysedom or folye
His herte, whyche that is his brestes eye
Was aye on her, that fayrer was to sene
Than euer was Heleyne, or Polixene

Eke of the day there passed not an houre
That to him selfe a thousande tyme he seyde
God goodly, to whom I serue and laboure
As I best can, nowe wolde god Cresseyde
Ye wolden on me rewe, er that I deyde
My dere herte alas, myne heele and hewe
And lyfe is loste, but ye woll on me rewe

Al other dredes weren from hym fledde
Bothe of thassiege, and hys saluacion
Ne in desyre non other foumes bredde
But argumentes to hys conclusyon
That she on hym wolde han compassyon
And he to ben her man, whyle he may dure
Lo here hys lyfe, and from his dethe his cure

The sharpe shoures fell, of armes prewe
That Hector or hys other brethrene bydden
Ne made hym only therfore ones mewe
And yet wasshe, where so me went or rydden
Foumde one ꝑ beste, and lengest tyme abydden
There peryl was, and dyd eke such trauayle
In armes, that to thynke it was meruayle

But for none hate he to the grekes had
Ne also for the rescous of the toun
Ne made hym thus in armes for to mad
But onely lo, for thys conclusyoun
To lyken her the bette for hys renoun
Fro day to day in armes so he spedde
That the Grekes as the dethe hym dredde

And fro this forth to reste him loue his stepe
And made his meate his foe, & eke his sorowe
Gan multiplye, that who so toke kepe
Jt shewed in his hewe both eue and morowe
Therfore a tyxte he gan hym for to borowe
Of other sicknesse, lest men of hym wende
That the hotte fyre of loue hym brende

And sayd he had a feuer, and fayred amys
But were it certayne I can nat say
If that hys lady vnderstode nat thys
Or fayned her she nyste, out of the way
But well rede I, that by no maner way
Me semed it, that she on hym rought
Or of hys payne, what so euer he thought

But than felte this Troylus suche wo
that he was wel nigh wode for aye his bode
was this, that she some wyght loued so
That neuer of hym she wolde han take hede
For which him thought he felt his hert blede
Ne of hys wo ne durst he nought beginne
To tellen her, for all thys worlde to winne

But whan he had a space from his care
Thus to hym selfe full ofte he gan to playne
He sayd, o foole nowe arte thou in the snare
That wythom lapedest al loues payne
Now art ꝑ bet, now gnaw thyn own chayn
Thou were aye woned eche louer repriehede
Of thing fro which thou canst ꝑ not defende

What wol nowe euery louer sayne of the
If this be wyst, but euer in thyne absence
Laughen in scorne, & sayne lo there gothe he
That is the man of great sapience
That helde vs louers leste in reuerence
Now thanked be god, he may gon on ꝑ daunce
Of hem that loue lyste fedly auaunce

But thou woefull Troylus, god wolde
Syth thou must louen, through thy destyne
That

That thou beſet were on ſuche one, ꝑ ſholde
Knowe all thy wo, all lacked her pyte
But alſo colde in loue towardes the
Thy lady is, as froſte in wynter moone
And thou forbo, as ſnowe in fyre is ſoone

God wolde I were aryued in the porte
Of dethe, to whiche my ſorowe wol me lede
My laſte, to me it were a great comforte
Than were I quyt of languyſſyng in drede
For the my hyd ſorowe yblowe in brede
I ſhall betraped ben a thouſande tyme
More than ꝑ foole, of whoſe folye men ryme

But now helpe god, and ye ſwete, for whó
I playne, ycaught ye neuer wight ſo faſte
O mercy dere herte, and helpe me from
The dethe, for I, while ꝑ my lyfe may laſte
More than my ſelfe wol loue you to my laſte
And with ſome kyndly loke gladeth me ſwete
Though neuer more thyng ye me byhete

¶ Theſe wordes, a ful many an other mo
He ſpake, and called euer in hys compleynte
Her name, for to tellen her hys wo
Tyll nyghe that he in ſalte teeres dreynte
Al was for naught, ſhe herde not his pleynte
And whan that he bethought on that folye
A thouſande folde hys wo gan multiplye

Bewaylyng in hys chambre thus alone
A frende of hys, that called was Pandare
Came ones in vnware, and herde him grone
And ſawe hys frende in ſuche diſtreſſe & care
Alas, ꝙ he, who cauſeth all thys fare?
O mercy god, what vnhap may this mene?
Han nowe thus ſone greues made you lene?

Or haſte thou ſome remorce of cõſcience?
And arte nowe fall in ſome deuocioun
And wayleſt for thy ſynne and thyne offence
And haſt for ferde caught a contricioun
God ſaue hem, that beſieged han our toun
That ſo can lay our folye on preſſe
And bryngе our lufly folke to holyneſſe

Theſe wordes ſayd he for the nones all
That vb ſuch thyng he myght him angry make
And with his anger don his ſorowe fal
As for a tyme, and hys corage awaken
But wel wyſte he, as ferre as tonges ſpaken
There nas a man of greter hardyneſſe
Than he, ne more deſyred worthyneſſe

¶ What cas (ꝙ Troylus) or what auenture
Hath gyded the to ſeke me languyſſyng
That am refuſe of euery creature?
But for the loue of god, at my praying
Go hence away, for certes my deyeng
Will the diſeſe, and I mote nedes dey
Therfore go way, there nys no more to ſey

But yf thou wene I be thus ſycke for drede
It is nat ſo, and therfore ſcorne nought
There is an other thyng I take of hede
Well more thã aught ꝑ grekes hã yet wrought
Which cauſe is of my deth for ſorow & thought
But though that I nowe tell it the ne leſſe
Be thou not wrothe, I hyde it for the beſte

This Pãdare, ꝑ nygh molte for wo & routh
Ful often ſayd alas, what may this be
Nowe frende (ꝙ he) yf euer loue or trouthe
Hath ben er this betwyxen the and me
Ne do thou neuer ſuche a cruelte
To hyden fro thy frende ſo great a care
Wolte thou nat well that I am Pandare?

I will parten with the all thy payne
If it ſo be I do the no comforte
As it is frendes right, ſothe for to ſayne
To enterparten wo, as glad diſporte
I haue and ſhall, for trewe or falſe reporte
In wronge and right yloued the al my lyue
Hyde nat thy wo fro me, but tell it blyue

Than gan this ſorowfull Troylus to ſyke
And ſaid him thus, God leue it be my beſt
To tellen the, for ſythe it may the lyke
Yet wol I tell it, though my herte breſt
And well wote I, thou mayſte do me no reſt
But leſte thou deme I truſte nat to the
Nowe herke frend, for thus it ſtant with me

Loue, ayenſt the whych who ſo defendeth
Hym ſelfen moſte, hym alder leſt auayleth
With diſpeyre ſo ſorowfully me offendeth
That ſtreight vnto ꝑ deth myne hert ſayleth
Therto deſyre ſo brennyngly me aſſayleth
That to ben ſtarne it were a greater ioye
To me, than kyng of Grece be and of Troye

Suffyſeth this, my full frende Pandare
That I haue ſaid, for now woſt thou my wo

And for the loue of god my colde care
So hyde it well, I tolde it neuer to me
For harmes myghten folowen mo than two
If it were wyst, but be thou in gladnesse
And let me sterue vnknowe of my distresse

Nowe hast thou thus vnhyndily & longe
Hyd this fro me, thou foole (q Pandarus)
Paraventure thou mayst after such one loge
That myn aunsle anon may helpen vs
This were a wonder thyng (q Troylus)
Thou couldest neuer in loue thy selfen wysse
How dyuel mayst thou dyngen me to dysse

Yea Troylus, now herke (q Pandare)
Though I be nyce, it happeth often so
That one that axes dothe full yuell fare
By good counsayle can kepe his frende therfro
I haue my selfe seyne a blynde man go
There as he fell, that coude loken wyde
A foole may eke a wyse man ofte gyde

A whetstone is no keruyng instrument
But yet it maketh sharpe keruyng tolis
And ther ꝑ wost that I haue aught myswent
Eschue thou that, for suche thyng to schole is
This often wyse men ben ware by foolis
If thou so do, thy wyt is well bywarred
By his contrarye is euery thyng declared

For how might euer swetnesse haue be knowe
To hym, that neuer tasted bytternesse
Ne no man wote what gladnesse is I trowe
That neuer was in sorowe, or some distresse
Eke white by blacke, by shame eke worthynesse
Eche set by other, more for other semeth
As men may sene, and so the wyse it demeth

Sythe thus of two contraries is o loze
I that haue in loue so ofte assayed
Greuaunces, ought connen well the more
Counsaylen the, of that thou arte dismayed
And eke the ne ought nat ben yuell apayed
Though I desyre wyth the for to bere
Thyne heuy charge, it shall the lasse dere

I wote well that it fared thus by me
As to thy brother Parys an herdesse
Whyche that cleped was Oenone
wrote in a complaynte of her heuynesse
Ye sawe the letter that she wrote, I gesse
Nay neuer yet twys (q Troylus)

Nowe (q Pandare) herkeneth it was thus

Phebus, that fyfth fonde arte of medicyne
(Quod she) and coude in euery wightes care
Remedy and rede, by herbes he knewe fyne
Yet to hym selfe hys comyng was ful bare
For loue had hym so bounden in a snare
Al for the doughter of the kyng Admete
That all hys craft ne coude hys sorowe bete

Right so fare I, vnhappy for me
I loue one best, and that me smerteth sore
And yet paraventure can I rede the
And nat my selfe, repreue me no more
I haue no cause I wot well for to sore
As doethe an hauke, that lyfteth for to play
But to thyne helpe, yet somwhat can I say

And of o thyng, right syker mayst thou be
That certayne, for to byen in the payne
That I shall neuer mo discouer the
Ne by my trouthe, I hope not destreyne
The fro thy loue, all though it were Helenne
That is thy brothers wyfe, & yebe it wyste
Be what she be, and loue her as the lyst

Therfore, as frendly as I the asswre
And tell me platte, what is thyn encheson
And fynall cause of wo, that ye endure
For douteth nothyng, myne entencion
Nas nat to you of reprehension
To speke as nowe, for no wight may byreue
A man to loue, syth that hym lyst to leue

And weteth wel, that both two ben byes
Vntrusten all, or elles all leue
But well I wot, the meane of it no byes is
As for to trusten some wight is a preue
Of trouth, and for thy wold I fayne remeue
Thy wronge conceyte, & do ꝑ soen wight trust
Thy wo to tell, and tell me yf the lust

The wyse eke sayth, wo hym that is alone
For and he fall, he hath none helpe to ryse
And sythe thou haste a felowe, tell thy mone
For thys nys nought certayne the nere wyse
To wynnen loue, as techen vs the wyse
To walowe and wepe, as Niobe the quene
Whose teeres yet in marble ben yseene

Let be thy wepyng, and thy dreryneſſe
And let vs lyſſen wo, wyth other ſpeche

So may

So may thy wofull tyme seme lesse
Delyte naught in wo, thy wo to seche
As don these fooles, that her sorowes eche
wyth sorowe, whan they han misaventure
And lusten nought to seechen other cure

Men seyne to wretche is consolacion
To have another felawe in his payne
That ought well ben our opinyon.
For bothe thou and I of loue playne
Ne full of sorowe am I, sothe to seyne
That certainly, no more harde grace
May syt on me, for why there is no space

If god wolle, thou art nought agast of me
Lest I wolde of thy lady the beggyle
Thou wost thy selfe, who that I loue parde
As I best can, gon sythen longe whyle
And sythen thou wost, I do it for no wyle
And sythe I am he, that thou trustest moste
Tel me somwhat, sens al my wo thou woste

Quod Troylus, for al thys no word sayde
But longe he lay stylle as he deed were
And after thys, wyth sykyng he abrayde
And to Pandarus voyce he lente hys eere
And vp his eyen caste he, and than in feere
was Pandarus, lest that in frenesye
He sholde fall, or ells sone deye

And said awake, ful wonderlyche & sharpe
what slombrest thou as in a lytargye
Or arte thou lyke an alle to the harpe
That bereth soun, whan men ꝑ stringes plye
But in hys mynde, of that no melodye
Nave synke hem to gladen, for that he
So dull is, in hys bestyalite

And with this Pandare of his wordes stent
But Troylus to hym no thyng answerde
For why, to tel was nought hys entent
Neuer to no man, for whom that he so ferde
For it is sayd, men maken ofte a yerde
wyth whiche the maker is hym selfe ybeten
In sondrie maner, as these wyse treten

And namelyche in hys counsayle tellyng
That toucheth loue, that ought ben secre
For of hym selfe it wolle ynough out spryng
But yf that it the bet governed be
Eke somtyme it is crafte to semne slee
For thyng, whiche in effecte men hunte faste
All this gan Troylus in hys herte caste

But natheles, whan he had herde him crye
I wake he gan, and syke wonder sore
And sayd frende, though that I slyl lye
I nam nat deefe, nowe peace & crye no more
For I haue herde thy wordes, and thy lore
But suffre me my fortune to bewaylen
For thy prouerbes may nought me auayle

Nor other cure canst thou none for me
Eke I nyl not ben cured, I wolle dey
what knowe I of the queue Niobe
Let be thyne olde ensamples, I the prey
No frende (quod Pandarus) therfore I sey
Suche is delyte of fooles to bewepe
Her wo, but seken boote they ne kepe

Nowe knowe I that reson in the fayleth
But tell me, yf I wyste what she were
For whom that the all misaventure ayleth
Durste thou that I tolde it in her eere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy self for feere
And her besought, on the to han some routhe
why nay (quod he) by God and by my trouthe

What, not as bestly (quod Pandarus)
As though myne owne lyte lay in this nede
why no parde sir (quod thys Troylus)
And why for that thou shuldest neuer spede
woste thou that well ye that is out of drede
(quod Troylus) for al that euer ye conne
She wol to no such wretche as I be wonne

(quod Pandarus) alas what may this be
That thou dispayred arte thus causelelle
what, lyeth nat thy lady, benedicite
Nowe wost thou so, that thou arte graceleſſe
Suche fuel is not alwaye boteleſſe
why put nat impossible thus thy cure
Sythe thyng to come is ofte in auenture

I graunt wel that thou endurest wo
As sharpe as dothe he Tesiphus in hel
whose stomake foules tyren euer mo
That hyghten vultures, as bokes tell
But I may not endure that thou dwell
In so vnskylfull an opinyon
That of thy wo nys no curacion

But ones nyll thou, for thy cowarde herte
And for thyne ire, & folysshe wylfulnesse

For wantrust tellen of thy sorowes smerte
Me to thyne owne helpe, do besynelle
As moche as speke a worde, ye more or lesse
But lyest as he that of lyte nothyng retche
what woman coude loue suche a wrecche

what may she demen other of thy dethe
If thou thus dye, and she not why it is
But that for feare, is polden by thy brethe
For grekes han besieged vs ywis
Lorde which a thikke shalt þ haue thi of this
Thus woll the fayne, & all the towne stones
The wrecche is deed, þ dinel haue his bones

Thou mayst alone here wepe, crye, & knele
But loue a woman that she wote it nought
And she wol quite it that thou shalte nat fele
Unknowe vnkyst, and lost that is vnsought
what many a man hath loue full dere abought
Twenty wynter that hys lady ne wyste
That neuer yet hys ladys mouth he kyste

what, shuld he therfore fallen in dispayre
Or be recreaunt for hys owne lene
Or slayne hym selfe, all be hys lady fayre
Nay nay: but euer in one be fresh and grene
To serue and loue, hys dere hertes quene
And thynke it is a guerdone her to serue
A thousande parte more, than he can deserue

And of that worde toke hede Troylus
And thought anone, what folye he was in
And howe that sothe hym sayde Pandarus
That for to sleen him selfe, might he nat wyn
But bothe done vnmanhode and a syn
And of hys dethe hys lady nought to wyte
For of hys wo, god wote she knewe full lyte

And with þ thought, he gan full sore syke
And sayd, Alas: what is me best to do
To whom Pandare sayd, yf the lyke
The best is, that thou tell me thy wo
And haue my trouth, but yf thou fynde it so
I be thy bote, or it be full longe
To peces do me drawe, and sythen honge

Ye, so sayst thou (q Troylus) alas:
But god wote it is naught the rather so
Full harde it were to helpen in thys caas
For well fynde I, that fortune is my foe
Me all the men that ryde comme or go
Wap of her cruell whele the harme withstod
For as her lyst, she playeth wyth fre & bonde

(q Pandarus) thã blamest thou fortune
For thou arte wroth, ye nawe at erst I se
woll thou nat well that fortune is comune
To euery maner wight, in some degree
And yet thou hast thys comforte, lo parde
That as her ioyes moten ouergone
So mote her sorowes passen euerychone

For yf her whele flyte any thyng to toure
Than telleth she fortune enuye to be
Now sith her whele by no way may sojourn
what woste thou yf her mutabylite
Right as thy selfen lust woll dou by the
Or that she be nought ferre fro thyn helping
Paramenture thou haste cause for to synge

And therfore woste thou what, I þ beseche
Let be thy wo, and turnyng to the grounde
For who so lyst haue bealyng of hys leche
To hym byhoueth first vnwyte hys wounde
To Cerberus in helle eye be I bounde
were it for my suster all thy sorowe
By my wyl she shulde be thyn to morowe

Loke vp I say, and tel me what she is
Anon, that I may gon about thy nede
know ych her aught, for my loue tel me this
Than wolde I hope rather for to spede
Tho gan the veyne of Troylus to blede
For he was hyt, and wore all reed for shame
A ha, q Pandare here begynneth game

And with þ worde, he gã him for to shake
And sayd there, thou shalte her name tell
But tho gan sory Troylus for to quake
As though men shulde han bad him vn to hel
And sayd alas, of all my wo the well
Than is my swete foe called Creseyde
And wel nigh wo the worde for feare he deyde

And whã þ Pandare herde her name neuen
Lorde he was glad, and sayd, frende so dere
Nowe fare a ryght, for Ioues name in heuẽ
Loue hath beset the wel, be of good cheere
For of good name, & wysedom, and manere
She hath ynough, and eke of gentylesse
If she be fayre, thou woste thy selfe I gesse

Ne neuer sey a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne a gladder: ne of speche
I frendlyer,

I frendlyer, ne more gracious
For to do well, ne lasse had nede to seche
What for to done, and all thys bet to eche
In honour, fo as farre as he maye stretche
I hynges herte fmoth by hem a voyrche

And for thy loke of good comforte thou be
For certaynly the fyrft poynt is thys
Of noble corage, and well ordayne the
A man to haue peace wyth hym selfe ywys
Do ought est thou, for nought but good it is
To louen well, and in a worthy place
The ought not clepe it happe, but grace

And also thynke, and therwyth glad the
That syth thy lady bertuous is all
So folowyth it, that there is some pyte
Amonges all these other in generall
And for they se that thou in speciall
Requyre nought, that is ayen her name
For bertue stretcheth not hym selfe to shame

But well is me that euer I was borne
That thou best arte in so good a place
For by my trothe I loue I durst haue swore
Thou shuld neuer haue tyde so fayre a grace
And wost ꝑ why, for ꝑ were wont to chace
At loue in scorne, and for dyspyte hem call
Saynt Idiote, lorde of these foles all

How often hast thou made thy nyce iapes
And sayd, that louers seruauntes euerychone
Of nycete, ben very goddes apes
And some wolde monch her meate alone
Lyggynge a bedde, and make hem for to grone
And some thou saydest had a blasshe feuere
And prayedest god, they shulde neuer keuere

And some of hem, toke on hem for ꝑ colde
More then ynough, so saydest thou full ofte
And some han sayned ofte tyme and tolde
Howe that they waken, when they slepe soft
And thus they wold haue set hem selfe aloft
And natheleslle were vnder at the last
Thus saydest thou, and iapedest full fast

Yet saydest thou, that for the more parte
These louers wolde speake in generall
And thoughten it was a syker arte
For saylynge for to assayen ouer al
Nowe maye I iape of the, yf that I shall
But natheles, though that I shulde dey
Thou arte none of tho, I dare well sey

Nowe bete thy brest, and say to god of Loue
Thy grace lorde, for nowe I me repent
Yf I myspake, for nowe my selfe I loue
Thus saye vp all thyne herte, in good entent
(Quod Troylus) ah lorde, I me consent
And pray to the, my iapes thou forgeue
And I shal neuer more whyle I lyue

Thou sayst wel, ꝙ Pandare, and nowe I hope
That thou the goddes wrath hast al apesed
And syth thou hast wepten many a drope
And said such thig, wherby thy god is plesed
Nowe wolde neuer god, but ꝑ were eased
And thynke wel she, of whom ryst al thy wo
Here after may thy comforte ben also

For thrike grounde, ꝑ beareth ꝑ wedes wycke
Beareth eke these holsome herbes, as ful ofte
Nert the foule nettle, rough and thycke
The rose wexeth, soote, smoth, and softe
And nert the valey ys the hyll a lofte
And nert the derke nyght the glad morowe
And also ioye is next the tyne of sorowe,

Nowe loke that attempre be thy brydelle
And for the best aye suffre to the tyde
Or els all our labour is on ydell
He hasteth well, that wysely can abyde
Be dyligent and trewe, and aye well hyd
Be lusty, free, persteuer in thy seruyse
And all is well, yf thou werke in thys wyse

But he that departed is in euery place
Is no where hole, as writen clerkes wyse
What wonder is, if suche one haue no grace
Eke wost thou how it fareth of some seruyse
As plante a tre or herbe, in sondrie wyse
And on the morowe pull it vp as blyue
No wonder is, though it may neuer thryue

And syth ꝑ god of loue hath the bestowed
In place digne vnto thy worthynesse
Stonde fast, for to good porte hast ꝑ rowed
And of thy selfe, for any heuenesse
Hope alwaye well, for but yf dyscryuesse
Or ouerhast our both labour shende
I hope of thys to maken a good ende

And wost ꝑ why, I am the lasse afered
Of thys mater, wyth my nece trete

For thys thanne I herde saye of wyse lered
Was neuer man of woman yet beyete
That wolde atempte to suffre lotes here
Celestiall, or elis lone of hyride
For the some grace I hope in herto fynde

And for to speke of her in speciall
Her beauty to beholden, and her youth
Yf eyr her thought, to ben celestiall
As yet, though that her lyst both and louth
And truely it eyr her well eyght nouth
A worthy knyght to louen and cherysse
And but she do, I holde it for a vyce

Wherfore I am, and woll ben aye redy
To payne me to do you thys seruyce
For both you to please, thys hope I
Here after, for ye ben both wyse
And conne it counsayle kepe in suche a wyse
That no man shall the wyser of it be
And so we maye ben gladed all thre

And by my trouth I haue eyght nowe of the
A good conceyt, in my wytte as I gesse
And what it is, I woll nowe that thou se
I thynke that syth Loue of hys goodnesse
Hath the conuerted out of wyckednesse
That thou shalt ben the best post I leue
Of all hys laye, and moste hys foes greue

Enlample why, se now these great clerkes
That erren aldermost ayen a lawe
And ben conuerted from her wycked werkes
Through grace of god, þ lest hem to withdrawe
Then arne they folke þ han most god in awe
And strengest fayethed ben I vnderstande
And conne an errour alderbest wythstonde

whē Troylus had herde Pandare assented
To ben hys helpe, in louynge of Cresseyde
Wert of hys wo, as who sayeth vnturmented
But hotter wert hys loue, and then he sayd
Wyth sobre chere, as though hys hert playde
Nowe blyssful Venus helpe, er that I sterue
Of þ Pandare, I mowe some thāke deserue

But dere frende, howe shal my wo be lesse
Tyll thys be done, and good eke tel me thys
How wyst thou fayne of me, or of my dystresse
Lest the be wrothe, thys drede I most ywys
Or woll not heren all, howe it is
All thys spede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her ene, she nyll no suche chynge here

(Quod Pandarus) I hadde a full great care
Lest the chorle maye fall out of the moone
Why herder I hate of the thy nyce fare
Why, entremete of that thou hast to doone
For goddes lone, I bydde the alsoone
So let me alone, and it shalbe thy beste
Why frende (q he) then done eyght as þ leste

But herde Pandare a worde, for I nolde
That thou in me wendest so great folye
That to my lady I desyren shulde
That toucheth harme, or any vylany
For dredelesse me were leuer dye
Then she of me ought elis vnderstood
But that, that myght sownen into good

Tho lough this Pādarus, and anon answerde
And I thy borow, eyr no wyght doth but so
I raught not though she stode and herde
Howe þ thou sayest, but fare well I woll go
A dieu, be glad, god spede vs both two
Yeue me thys labour, and thys busynesse
And of my spede, be thyne all the swetnesse

Tho Troylus gan downe on knees to fal
And Pandare in hys armes hente faste
And sayd, nowe fye on the gretes all
Yet parde, god shall helpen at laste
And diedelesse, yf that my lyfe maye laste
And god to sonne, to some of hem shall smerte
And yet me athynketh þ this euer laste

Nowe Pandare, I can no more say
Thou wyse, thou wost, thou mayst, þ art all
My lyfe, my death, hole in thyne hōde I lay
Help me now (q he) yes by my trouth I shal
God yelde the frende, and thys in speyall
(Quod Troylus) that thou me recōmaunde
To her that maye me to the death cōmaunde

Thys Pandarus tho, desyrous to serue
Hys full frende, he sayd in thys manere
Farewell, and thynke I wol þ thāke deserue
Haue here my trouth, and that thou shalt here
And went hys way, thynking on thys matere
And how he best might besechen her of grace
And fynde a tyme therto, and a place

For euery wight that hath a house to loūde
He renneth not the worke for to begynne
wyth

wyth rakel hande, but he woll byde a stoûde
And sende hys herte lyne out fro wythin
Wherwyll hys purpose for to wynne
All thys Pandare in hys herte thought
And cast his werke ful wisely er he wrought

But Troylus lay tho no lenger downe
But anone upon hys stede baye
And in the felde he played the lyoun
Wo was ỳ greke, ỳ wyth hym met that daye
And in the towne, his maner tho forth aye
So goodly was, and gat hym so in grace
That eche hym loued, that loked in hys face

For he became the frendlyest wyght
The gentyleſt, and eke the moſte fre
The thryftyeſt, and one the beſt knyght
That in hys tyme was, or myght be
Deed were hys tapes and hys crueltè
Hys bygh porte, and hys maner straunge
And eche of hem, gan for a vertue chaunge

Nowe let vs ſtynte of Troylus a ſtounde
That fareth lyke a man, that hurte is ſore
And is somedele of akynge of hys wounde
Pieſted well, but healed no dele more
And as an eaſy pacient the lore
Wyte, of hym that goeth aboute hys cure
And thus he dyſcryueth forth hys auenture

Explicit liber primus.



Ut of theſe blacke wawes
for to ſayle
O wynde, the weder gyn
neth clere
For in thys ſee, the bote
hath ſuche trauayle
Of my conuynge, that
vnneth I it ſtere
Thys ſee clepe I the tempeſtous matere
Of dyſpayre, that Troylus was in
But nowe of hope the kalendes begyn

O lady myne that called arte Cleo
Thou be my ſpede fro thys forth, & my muſe
To ryme well thys boke tyll I haue do
Me nedeth here none other arte to vſe
For why, to euery louer I me excuſe
That of no ſentement I thys endyte
But out of latyn, in my tonge it wryte

wherfore I nyl haue neither thãke ne blame
Of all thys worke, but pray you meekely
Dyſblameth me, yf any worde be lame
For as myne auctour ſayd, ſo ſay I
Eke though I ſpake of loue vnfeelyngly
No wonder is, for it no thynge of newe is
A blynde man can not iuge well in hewis

I knowe ỳ in forme of ſpeche is chaunge
Wythin a thouſande yere, and wordes tho
That haddé pryſe, now wõder nyce & ſtrãge
Thynketh hem, and yet they ſpake hem ſo
And ſpedde as well in loue, as men nowe do
Eke for to wynnen loue, in ſondrye ages
In ſondrye londes, ſondrye ben vſages

And for thy, yf it happe in any wyſe
That here be any louer in thys place
That herkeneth, as the ſtory well deuyſe
Howe Troylus came to hys ladyes grace
And thynketh, ſo nolde I not loue purchace
Or wondreth on hys ſpeche or hys doynge
I not, but it is to me no wondrynge

For euery wight, which that to Rome went
Halte not o path, ne alwaye o maniere
Eke in ſome lande were all the game ſhent
yf that men ſarde in loue, as men done here
As this, in open doynge or in chere
In vyſityng, in forme, or ſayd our ſawes
For thy mé ſayne, ech coũtre hath hys lawes

Eke ſcarſely ben there in thys place three
That haue in loue ſayd lyke, and done in all
For to thys purpoſe thys maye lyken the
And the ryght nought, yet all is done or ſhall
Eke ſome mé graue in tre, ſome in ſtone wall
As it betyde, but ſyth I haue begonne
Myne authour ſhal I folowe, as I konne.

Explicit prohemium.



N May that mother is of
monthes glade
That freſhe flowres, blewe,
whyte, and rede
Ben quycke ayen, that wynter
deed made
And full of baume is fletynge euery mede
whẽ Phebus doth her bryght beames ſpredè
Ryght in the whyte Bole, it ſo betydde
As I ſhal ſynge, on Mayes daye the thyrdde

That

That Pandarus for all hys wyle speche
Felte the hys parte of loues shottes kene
That coude he neuer so wel of louyng preche
It made hys hewe a daye full ofte grene
So shope it, that hym fyll that daye a tene
In loue, for whych in woo to bedde he wente
And made er it were daye full many a wente

The swalowe Progne, with a sorowful lay
Whē morow come, gan make her waymētyng
Why she so shapen was, and euery lay
Pandare a bedde, halfe in a slomberyng
Tyl she so nygh hym made her waymētyng
Howe Thereus gan forth her syster take
That wyth the noyse of her he gan awake

And to call, and dresse hym vp to ryse
Remēbryng hym, hys arande was to done
From Troylus, and eke hys great empryse
And call, & knewe in good plyte was ꝑ mone
To done voyage, and toke hys way full sone
Vnto hys neces paleys there besyde
Nowe Janus god of entre, thou hym gyde

when he was come vnto hys neces place
where is my lady, to her folke (quod he)
And they hym tolde, and in forth he gan pace
And founde two other ladyes syt and she
wythin a paued parlour, and they thre
Herden a mayden hem reden the geste
Of the siege of Thebes, whyle hem leste

(Quod Pandarus) madame god you se
wyth your boke, and all the companye
Eygh vncle myne, welcome ywys (quod she)
And vp she rose, and by the honde in hye
She toke hym faste, & sayd, thys nyght thrye
To good mote it turne, of you I mette
And vp that word, she down on bēch hym set

Yea nece, ye shul faren well the bet
yf God woll all thys yere (quod Pandarus)
But I am sory that I haue you let
To herken of your boke ye playsen thus
For goddes loue what sayeth it, tel it vs
Is it of loue, or some good ye me lere
Uncle (q she) your maystresse is not here

wyth ꝑ they gonnen laugh, & tho she seyde
Thys romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede
And we haue herd how ꝑ kyng Layus deyde
Through Edippus hys sonne, & al the deede
And how we styuen, all these letters reede
Howe the bysshop, as the boke can tell
Amphiorax, fyl through the grounde to hell

(Quod Pādarus) al thys knowe I my selue
And all thassiege of Thebes, and the care
For herof ben there maked bokes twelue
But let be thys, and tell me howe ye fare
Do way your barbe, & shewe your face bare
Do way your boke, ryse vp & let vs daunce
And let vs done to May some obseruaunce

Eygh, god forbyd (q she) be ye mad
Is that a wydowes lyfe, so god you saue
By god ye maken me eyght sore adrad
Ye ben so wylde, it semeth as ye raue
Ye sate me well bet aye in a caue
To byde, and rede in holy sayntes lyues
Let maydens gone to daūce, & yonge wyues

As euer thryue I (quod thys Pandarus)
yet couthe I tell a thynge, to done you playe.
Nowe vncle dere (quod she) tell it vs
For goddes loue, is ther thassiege awey
I am of grekes ferde, so that I dey
Nay nay (q he) as euer mote I thryue
It is a thynge well bet then suche fyue

Yea holy god (q she) what thynge is that
what bet then suche fyue eygh nay ywys
For al thys worlde, ne can I reden what
It shulde ben, some raye I trowe it is
And but your selfen tell vs what it is
Why wyt is for to aredē it all to leme
As helpe me god, I not what that ye meme

And I your borowe, ne neuer shall (q he)
This thing be told to you, as mote I thryue
And why vncle myne, why so (q she)
By god (q he) that woll I tell as blyue
For prouder woman is there none on lyue
And ye it wyste, in al the towne of Troye
I raue not, so euer haue I toye

Tho gan she wondren more then before
A thousande folde, & downe her eyen caste
For neuer syth the tyme that she was bore
To knowen thynge, desyred she so faste
And wyth a syke, she sayd hym at the laste
Nowe vncle myne, I nyll you not displese
Nor asken more, that may do you displese

Do

Tho after thys, with many wordes glade
And frendly tales, and with mery chere
Of thys & that they speake, & gonnen wade
In many an unkouth glad & depe matere
Is frendes done, when they bethe yfere
Till he gan aken hym howe Hector ferde
That was the townes wall, & grekes yerde

Ful wel I thanke it god, sayd Pandarus
Save in hys arme he hath a lytel wounde
And eke hys fresshe brother Troylus
The wyse worthy Hector the seconde
In whome that euery vertue lyst habounde
Is all trouth, and all gentylnesse
Wysedome, honoure, fredom, & worthynesse

In good fayth eme (q she) that lyketh me
Ther faren well, god saue hem both two
For trewely, I holde it great deynte
A kynges sonne in armes well to do
And be of good condicions therto
For great power, and morall vertue here
Is selde yfene in one persone yfere

In good fayth that is soth (q Pandarus)
But by my trouth, the kynge hath sonnes twey
That is to meane, Hector and Troylus
That certaynly though that I shulde dey
They ben as doyde of vyces, dare I sey
As any men that lyuen vnder sonne
Her might is wide yknow, & what they cõne

Of Hector nedeth it nomore for to tell
In all this worlde, there nys a better knight
Then he that is of worthynes the well
And he well more vertue hath then myght
Thys knoweth many a wise & worthy knyght
The same pryse of Troylus I sey
God helpe me so, I knowe not suche twey

By god (q she) of Hector that is soth
Of Troylus the same thynge trowe I
For dredelesse, men telleth that he doth
In armes daye by daye, so worthely
And beareth hym here at home so gentilly
To euery wyght, that all pryse hath he
Of hem that me were leuest praysed be

Ye say ryght soth ywys (q Pandarus)
For yesterday, who so had wyth hym ben
Myght haue wondred vpon Troylus
For neuer yet so thycke a swarme of been
Ne flewe, as grekes fro hym gan fleen
And through the feld in euery wyghtes eere
There was no crye, but Troylus is there

Now here, now there, he hunted hem so fast
There nas but grekes blode, and Troylus
Nowe hem he hurte, & hym al downe he cast
Ye where he went it was arayed thus
He was her dethe, and sheide & lyfe for vs
That as the day, there durst him none withstode
Whyle the he helde hys blody swerde in honde

Vnto he is the frendlyest man
Of great estate, that euer I sawe my lyue
And where hym lyst, best felowshyp can
To suche as hym thynketh able for to thryue
And wyth the worde, tho Pandarus as blyue
He toke hys leaue, and sayd I woll gon hen
Nay, blame haue I vncle (q she then)

what ayleth you to be thus wery soone
And namelyche of women, woll ye so?
Nay sytteth downe, by god I haue to done
With you, to speake of wysedome er ye go
And euery wyght that was about hem tho
That herde that, gan ferre awaye to stonde
Whyle they two had al that hem lyst in hõde

when the her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her estate, and of her gouernaunce
(Quod Pandarus) now tyme is the I wende
But yet I say, aryseth let vs daunce
And cast your wydowes habyt to mischaunce
what lyst you thus your selfe to dysfygure
Sych you is tydde so glad an aduenture

But well bethought, for loue of god (q she)
Shall I not weten what ye meane of thys
No, thys thyng asketh leyser tho (q he)
And eke me wolde moche greue ywys
yf I it tolde, and ye it toke amys
yet were it bet my tonge to holde styll
Then saye a soth, the were ayenst your wyll

For nece, by the goddesse Mynerue
And Jupiter, that maketh the thonder ryngе
And the blysful Venus, that I serue
Ye ben the woman in thys worlde lyuynge
wythouten paramours, to my wetynge
That I best loue, and lothest am to greue
And that ye weten well your selfe I leue

Iwys

Troylus myne vncle (quod she) graūt mercy
Your frendshyp haue I founden euer yet
I am to no man holden truely
So moche as you, and haue so lytell quyt
And wyth the grace of god, emforth my wyt
As in my gylte, I shall you neuer offende
And yf I haue er thys I woll amende

But for the loue of god, I you beseche
As ye be he, that I loue moste and tryste
Let be to me your fremed maner speche
And saye to me your nece, what ye lyste
And wyth þ worde, her vncle anone her kyst
And sayd, gladly my leue nece dere
Take it for good, that I shall saye you here

wyth that she gan her eyen downe to caste
And wandersus to cough gan a lyte
And sayd: Nece alwaye so, for the laste
Howe so it be, that some men hem delyte
wyth subtell arte her tales for tendyte
yet for all that in her entencioun
Her tale is all for some conclusioun

And syth thende is euery tales strength
And thys mater is so behouely
what shulde I payne, or drawen on length
To you that ben my frende so faythfully
And wyth that word he gan eyght inwardly
Beholden her, and loken in her face
And sayd, on suche a myrrour good grace

Then thought he thus, yf I my tale endyte
Aught harde, or make a processe any whyle
She shall no fauour haue therin but lyte
And trowe I wolde her in my wyll begyle
For tendre wyttes wenen all be wyle
where as they can not playnlych vnderstōde
For thy her wyt to seruen woll I fonde

And loked on her in a besy wyse
And she was ware that he beheld her so
Why lorde (qᵭ she) so fast ye me auyse
Sawe ye me neuer er now, what say ye no?
Yes yes (qᵭ he) and bet woll er I go
But by my trouth I thought nowe, yf ye
Be fortunate, for nowe men shall it se

For euery wyght, some good ye auenture
Somtyme is shape, yf he it can receyuen
But yf he nyll take of it no cure
when that it cometh, but wilfully it weyuen
Lo, neyther take nor fortune hym deceyuen
But eyght hys owne slouthe and wretchydnesse
And such a wyght is for to blame I gesse

Good auenture, O belle nece haue ye
Full lyghtly founden, and yecomme it take
And for the loue of god, and eke of me
Cacche it anone, lest auenture slake
what shulde I lenger processe of it make
Yeue me your hōde for in this world is none
Yf that you hyt a wyght so well begone

And syth I speake of good entencioun
As I to you haue tolde well here beforne
And loue as well your honour and renoun
As any creature in all the worlde yborne
By all the othes that I haue you swoorne
And ye be wroth therfore, or wene I lye
Ne shall I neuer sene you eyte wyth eye

Beth not agast, ne quaketh not, wherto
Ne chaungeth not for feare so your hewe
For hardely the worst of thys is do
And though my tale as nowe be to you newe
Yet trust alwaye, ye shall me fynde trewe
And were it thynge þ me thought vnsittyng
To you woldе I no suche tales bryng

Nowe my good eme, for goddes loue I pray
(Quod she) come of and tell me what it is
For both I am agast what ye woll say
And eke me longeth it to were ywys
For whether it be well, or be amys
Say on, let me not in thys feare dwell
So woll I done, nowe herkeneth I shal tell

Nowe nece myne, the kynges dere sonne
The good wyse worthy, fresche and free
wherych alwaye for to done wel is hys wonne
The noble Troylus so loueth the
That but ye helpe it woll hys herte be
Lo here is all, what shulde I more sey
Both what you lyst, to make hym lyue or dey

But yf ye let hym dye, I woll sterue
Haue here my trouth, nece I nyl not lyen
Al shuld I wyth thys knyfe my throte kerue
wyth that the teeres burst out of hys eyen
And sayd, yf that ye done vs both dyen
Thus gyltelesse, then haue ye fyshed fayre
what mende ye, though þ we both apayre

Alas

Alas, he which that is my lorde so dere
That true man, that noble gentle knyght
That nought desyreth, but your frendlye
I se him dyen, there he goth vpright (chere
And hasteth hym with al his full myght
For to ben slayne, yf hys fortune assent
Alas that god you suche a beautye sent

yf it be so, that ye so cruell be
That of his deth you lysteth nought to reche
That is so true and worthy as we se
Nomore than of a taper or a wrecche
yf ye be suche, your beautie may not stretch
To make a mendes of so cruell a dede
Auysement is good before the nede.

wo worth the fayre Gemme vertulesse
wo worth that herbe also that doth no bote
wo worth the beautie that is routhlesse
wo worth ỳ wyght ỳ trede eche vnder fote
And ye that ben of beautye crop and rote
yf ther with all in you ne be no routh
Than is harme ye lyuen by my trouth

And also thynke wel, that this is no gaude
For me were leuer, thou I and he
wer hāged, than I shuld be his baude
As hygh as men myght on vs all se
I am thyne Eme, the shame were to me
As well as the, yf that I shulde assent
Though myne abet, that he thyne honoure (shent
Now vnderstōd, for I you nought requyre
To bynde you to hym through no beheste
Saue only that ye make hym better chere
Than ye han done er this, & more feest
So that his lyfe saued at the leest
This all and some, and playnly our entent
God helpe me so, I neuer other ment

Lo, this requeste is nought but skyll i wys
Ne dout of reson parde is there none
I set the worst, that ye dreden this
Yen wold wōdre to sene hym come & gone
Therayenst answer I this anon
That euery wight, but he be foole of kynde
Wol deme it loue of frēdshyp in his mynde

what, who woll demen though he se a man
To temple gon, that he the ymages eeteth
Thynke eke, howe wel and wyssely ỳ he can
Gouerne hym selfe, ỳ he nothinge forgeteth
That where he cōmeth he prys & thōk hi get
And eke therto he shal com here so seld (teth
what force were it, though all the towne be (helde.
Such loue of frendes reigneth al this toun
And wrye you in that mantell euermo
And god so wys be my sauacion
As I haue sayd, your best is to do so
But good nece alway to stynt his wo
So let your daunger, sugred ben alyte
That of his death ye be nat all to wyte

Creseyde which ỳ herd hym in this wyse
Thought, I shal felē what he meneth twis
Now Eme (q she) what wolde ye deuyse
what is your rede, I shulde done of this:
That is well sayd (q he) certayne best is
That ye hym loue ayen for his louyng
As loue for loue is skylfull guerdonyng

Thynke eke how elde wasteth euery houre
In eche of you a parte of beautye
And therfore er that age the deuoure
Go loue, for olde there woll no wyght of ỳ
Let this prouerbe, a lore vnto you be
To late ywarre, q bautie, whan it past
And elde counteth daunger at the last

The kynges foole is wont to crye loude
whā ỳ him thinketh a womā beareth her hye
So longe mote ye loue, and all proude
Tyll crowes feet growe vnder your eye
And send you than a myrrour in to prye
In which ỳ ye maye se your face a morowe
Nece, I byd wyth you nomore sorowe

with this he stynt, and cast downe the heed
And she began to brest awepe anon
And sayd alas for wo, why nere I deed
For of this worlde, the fayth is all agone
Alas, what shulden straunge to me done
whan he that for my best frende I wende
Rate me to laue, and shulde it me defende.

Alas, I wolde haue trusted doutlesse
That yf that I, through my disaduenture
Had loued eyther hym or Achilles
Hector, or any maner creature
Ye nolde haue had no mercy ne measure
On me, but alwaye had me in repreue
This false worlde alas who may it leue-

What/ is this all the ioye and all the feste
Is this your reuerence this my blyssful caas
Is this the very mede of your behest
Is all this paynted proeme sayd (alas)
Ryght for this fyne, O lady myne Pallas
Thou in this dredefull case for me purueye
For so astonyed am I, that I dye.

With that she gan full sorowfully to syke
Ne may it be no bet (quod Pandarus)
By god I shal nomore come here this weke
And god toforne, that am mystrusted thus
I se well nowe, ye setten lyght of vs
Or of our death, alas I wofull wrecche
Wyght ye yet lyue, of me were nought to (recche.

O cruell god, O dispytous Marte
O furies thre of hell, on you I crye
So let me neuer out of this house departe
yf that I ment harme or vyllanye
But syth I se my lorde mote nedes dye
And I with hym here I me shryue and sey
That wyckedly ye done vs both dey

But syth it lyketh you that I be deed
By Neptunus that god is of the see
Fro this forth shall I neuer eten breed
Tyll I myne owne herte blonde maye se
For certayne I woll dye as sone as he
And vp he stert, and on his waye he raught
Tyll she agayne hym by the lappe caught.

Creseyde, whych yͤ wel nygh starfe for feare
So as she was the fearfullest wyght
That might be and herde eke with her eare
And sawe the sorowful ernest of the knyght
And in his prayer sawe eke none vnryght
And for the harme eke that might fall more
She gan to rewe, and dred her wonder sore

And thought this, vnhappes fallen thycke
All day for loue, and in suche maner caas
As men den cruell in hem selfe and wycke
And yf this man slee here hym selfe alaas
In my presence, it nyl be no solace
what men wolde of it deme, I can nat saye
It nedeth me ful slyghly for to playe

And with a sorowfull sygh she sayd thrye
Ah lorde, what me is tyd a sory chaunce
For myne astate lyeth in a ieopardye
And eke myne emes lyfe lyeth in balaunce
But nathelesse, with gods gouernaunce
I shall so done, myne honour shal I kepe
And eke his lyfe, and syne for to wepe

Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese
yet had I leuer maken hym good chere
In honour, than myne emes lyfe to lese
Ye sayne ye nothyng els me requere
No wys (quod he) myne owne nece dere
Now wel (quod she) a I wyll do my payne
I shal myne herte ayen my lust constrayne

But yͤ I nyll nat holden hym in honde
Ne loue a man, that can I nought ne maye
I yenst my wyll, but els wol I fonde
Wyn honor saue plese hym from day today
Therto nolde I nat ones haue sayde naye
But that I dred, as in my fantasye
But cese cause, ave ceseth maladye.

But here I make a protestation
That in this processe yͤ ye depper go
That certaynly, for no saluacion
Of you, though that ye sterue both two
Though all the worlde on a day be my fo
Me shall I neuer on hym haue other routh
I graut wel (quod Pandare) by my trouth.

But maye I trust wel to you (quod he)
That of this thyng yͤ ye han bysyght me here
Ye woll it holde truly vnto me
yea doutelesse (quod she) myne vncle dere
Me that I shal haue cause in this matere
(Quod he) to playne, or ofter you to precche
Why nu parde, what nedeth more speche.

Tho fyll they in other tales glade
Tyll at the last, O good eme (quod she tho)
For loue of god which that vs both made
Tell me how fyrst ye wysten of his wo
Wot none of it but ye, he sayd no
Can he wel speke of loue (quod she) I prey
Tel me, for I the bet me shal puruey

Tho Pandarus a lyte gan to smyle
And sayd: By my trouth I shall now tell
This other daye nat gone full longe whyle
Within the paleyes garden by a well
Gan he and I, well halfe a daye to dwell
Right for to speken of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekes mighten disauaunce.

Soone

Soone after that we gone for to lepe
And casten with our dartes two and fro
Till at the last he sayd, he wolde slepe
And on the grasse adowne, he layd him tho
And I after gan to romen to and fro
Till that I herde, as I walked alone
How he began full wofully to grone

Tho gan I stalke hym stedily behynde
And sikerly the soth for to sayne
As I can clepe agen now to my mynde
Right thus to loue he gan hym for to playn
Ye lady dere, haue routh vpon my payne
All haue I ben rebell in myne entent
Nowe (Mea culpa) Lorde I me repent

O god, that at thy disposition
Ledest the lyne, by iust purueyaunce
Of euery wyght, my lowe confession
Accept in gree, & sende me suche penaunce
As lyketh the, but from dissesperaunce
That may my goost depart alway fro the
Thou be my shylde for thy benignitie.

For certes lord so sore hath she me wouñded
That stode in black: with lokyng of her eyé
That to my hertes botom it is yrounded
Though which I wot ỳ I mot nedes dyen
This is ỳ worst, I dar me nought bewryen
And well the hoter ben the gledes red
That men hem wryen vñ asshen pale & ded.

with that he smot his hed adowne anon
And gan to mutre, I nat what truly
And I with that gan stylle away to gone
And let thereof as nothyng wyst had I
And came agayne anon & stode hym by
And sayd awake, ye slepen all to longe
It semeth nought ỳ loue doth you wronge.

That slepen so, that nomá may you awake
Whosey euer or this, so dull a man
Ye frende (quod he) do ye your hedes ake
For loue, and let me lyuen as I can
But lord that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as fresh a countenaunce
As though he shuld haue led the new daunce

Thus passed forth, till now this other daye
It fell that I come rumyng all alone
Into his chãber, & founde how ỳ he laye
Vpon his bed: but man so sore grone
Ne herde I neuer and what was his mone
Ne wyst I nought, for as I was cõmynge
Al sodaynly, he left his complaynyng

Of which I toke somwhat suspection
And nere I come, & founde hym wepe sore
And god so wyse be my saluacioun
As neuer of thyng had I no routh more
For neyther wyth rugyn, ne with no lore
Vnnethes myght I fro the deth hym kepe
That yet felt I myne hert for hym wepe

And god wot neuer syth that I was borne
was I so busy noman for to preche
Ne neuer was to wyght so depe sworne
Er he tolde who myght ben his leche
But now to you reherse all his spech
Or al his wofull wordes for to sowne
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swon

But for to saue his lyfe, and eke nought
And to non harm of you, thus am I driuen
And for ỳ loue of god that vs hath wrought
Such chere hym doth, that he á I may liué
Now haue I plat to you myne hert shryué
And syth ye wot that myne entent is clene
Take hede therof, for none euyll I mene

And eke good thrift, I pray to god haue ye
That han such one ycaught without en net
And be ye wyse, as ye be fayre to se
Wel in the ryng than is the Ruby set
There were neuer two so well ymet
Whan ye ben his all hole, as he is your
Ther mighty god yet graut vs se that hour

Nay therof spake I nat: Aha (quod she)
As helpe me god, ye shenden euery dele
A mercy dere nece, anon (quod he)
whatso I spake ỳ ment nought but wele
By Mars the god, that helmed is of stele
Now beth not wroth my blod, my nece dere
Nowe well (quod she) forgeuen be it here.

with this he toke his leue, & home he wẽt
Ye lord how he was glad, and wel bygon
Creseyde arose, and lenger she ne stent
But streyght into her closet went anon
And set her downe, as styll as any stone
And euery worde gan vp & down to wynde
That he had sayd, as it came her to mynde.

And wexe sodenly ashamed in her thought
Right for the newe cast, but whan ꝑ she
was ful auysed, tho sounde she right nought
Of peryll, why that she ought aferde be
For man may loue of possibilitie
A woman so his hert may to breste
And she nat loue ayen, but if her leste

But as she sate alone, and thought thus
Thalcrye arose at scarmoche al without
And men cryed in the strete, se Troylus
Hath right now put to flyght ꝑ grekes rout
With that gonne al her meyne for to shoute
A, go we se, cast vp the yates wyde
For thyough this strete he mot to palys ryde

For other waye is fro the yates none
Of dardanus there open is the cheyne
With that come he, and al his folke anone
In easy pace rydyng, in routes tweyne
Right as his happy day was sothe to seyne
For whiche men sayth may nat disturbed be
That shal betyde of necessyte

This Troylus sate on his baye stede
Al armed saue his hed, ful richely
And wounded was his horse, ꝑ gan to blede
On whiche he rode a pace ful softely
But sothe a knyghtly syght trewly
As was on him, was nat withouten layle
To loke on Mars, that god is of batayle

So lyke a man of armes, and a knyght
He was to sene, fulfylled of hygh prowesse
For bothe he had a body, and myght
To don that thyng, as wel as hardynesse
And eke to sene him in his geare dresse
So fresshe, so yonge, so weldy semed he
It was an heuen vpon him for to se

His helme to hewen was in twenty places
That by a tyssue honge, his backe behynde
His shelde to dasshed in swerdes ꝑ in maces
In whiche men myght many an arowe fynde
That thyrled had horne, nerfe and rynde
And aye the people cried here cometh our ioy
And next his brother, holder vp of Troye

For whiche he wexe a lytel reed for shame
whan he so herd the people vpon him cryen
That to be holde, it was a noble game
How sobrely he cast adowne his eyen
Creseyde anon gan all his chere espyen
And let it so sinke in her hert ynne
That to her self she sayde, who yaue me (pryse

For al her owne thought, she wexe all red
Remembryng her right thus, lo this is he
which ꝑ myne vncle Pandare me bad be ded
But I on hym haue mercy and pytie
And with ꝑ thought for pure shamed she
Gan in her hed to pull, and that as fast
whyle he and all the people forth by past

And gan to cast, and reuen vp and downe
within her thought his excellent prowesse
And his estate, and also his renowne
His wyt, his shape, and eke his gentylesse
But most her fauour was for his distresse
was al for her, ꝑ thought it were a routh
To sleen suche one, yf that he ment trouthe.

Now myght some enuyous iangle thus
This was a sodayn loue, how might it be
That she so lyghtly loued Troylus
Right for the fyrst syght: yea parde
Now whoso sayd so, mote he neuer the
For euery thynge a gynnyng hath it nede
Er al be wrought, withouten any drede

For I saye nat, that she so sodaynly
Yaf hym her loue, but that she gan enclyne
To lyken hym tho, ꝑ I haue told you why
And after that, his manhod and his pyne
Made that loue within her gan to myne
For which by processe, and by good seruyce
He wan her loue, and in no sodayne wyse.

And also blysful Venus were arayed
That in her seuenth house of heuen tho
Disposed were, and with aspectes payed
To helpe sely Troylus of his wo
And soth to sayne, she nas nat al a fo
To Troylus in his natiuite
God wote, that were the sooner sped he

Now let vs stynt of Troylus a thro we
That rydeth forth, and let vs turne fast
Vnto Creseyde, ꝑ henge her hed full lowe
There as she sat alone, and gan to cast
wherto she wolde apoynt her at the last
If it so were, her Eme ne wolde cesse
For Troylus, vpon her for to prese

And

And lorde so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter of which I haue you tolde
And what to don best were, & what to eschue
That pleyted she full oft in many solde
Now was her hert warme, now was it cold
And what she thought, sowhat shal I write
As myne auctor lyketh for tendyte

She thought fyrst, that Troylus persone
She knewe by syght, & eke his gentilnesse
And thus she sayd, al wer it nought to don
To graunt him loue, yet for his worthynes
It wer honour with play & with gladnesse
In honestie, with suche a lorde to dele
For myne estate, and also for his heale.

Eke wel wot I, my kynges sonne is he
And syth he hath to se me suche delyte
yf I wolde otterlyche his syght flye
Peraduenture he might haue me in despite
Through which I must stond in worse plyte
Now were I wyse, me hate to purchace
Without nede, there I may stonde in grace.

In euery thyng, I wot there lyeth mesure
For though a man forbyd dronkennesse
He nought forbyddeth that euery creature
Be drynkelesse for alwaye as I gesse
Eke syth I wot for me is his distresse
I ne ought nat for that thyng hym despyse
Syth it is so, he meaneth in good wyse

And eke I knowe, of longe tyme agone
His thewes good, and that he nys nat nyce
No vaunter out of sayne men, certayn he is non
To wyse is he, to done so great a vyce
Me als I nyl hym neuer to cherice
That he shall make auaunt by iust cause
He shall me neuer bynde in suche a clause

Now set I case, the hardest is twys
Men myght demen that he loueth me
what dishonour were it vnto me this?
Why iche hym let of that, why nay parde?
I knowe also, and alwaye here and se
Men louen women al this towne about
Be they the worse? why nay without doute.

I thynke eke how, he worthy is to haue
Of al this noble towne the thryftyest
That woman is, yf she her honour saue
For out and out he is the worthyest
Haue onely Hector, which that is the best
And yet his lyfe lyeth al nowe in my cure
But suche is loue, and eke myne auenture.

Me me to loue a wonder is it nought
For well wot I my selfe so god me spede
Ill woll I that none wyst of this thought
I am one the fayrest out of drede
And goodlyest, whoso that taketh hede
And to men sayne in al the towne of Troye
what wonder is: though he of me haue ioye.

I am myne owne woman well at ease
I thanke it god, as after myne estate
Right yonge, & stond vntyed in lusty lese
Without en ielousye and suche debate
Shal no husbond sayne to me checke mate
For eyther they ben full of ielousye
Or masterfull, or louen nouelry

what shal I don? to what fyne lyue I thus
Shal I nat loue, in case yf that me lest?
what pardieux I am not religious
And though that I myne hert set at rest
Vpon this knyght that is the worthyest
And kepe alway myne honour & my name
By all right it may do me no shame

But right as whan the sonne shyneth bright
In Marche, that chaungeth oft tyme his face
And that a cloude is put vp wonde to flight
which ouerspreat the sonne as for a space
A cloudy thought gan through her soul pace
That ouerspradd her bright thoughtes all
So that for feare almoost she gan to fall

That thought was this: Alas syth I am free
Shulde I now loue, and put in iopardye
My suhertnesse, and thrallen lybertye
Alas, how durst I thynken that folye?
May I not well in other folke aspye
Her dredful ioy, her constreynt & her payne
There loueth non, that she ne hath waye to playne.

For loue is yet the most stormy lyfe
Right of hym selfe, that euer was begon
For euer some mystrust, or nyce stryfe
There is in loue some cloude ouer the sun
Therto we wretched wome nothing con
whan vs is wo, but wepe and syt & thynke
Our wyrch is this, our owne wo to dryuke.

Mis wyched tonges bene so prest
To speke vs harme, that men be besy ever
That ryght anon as cesed is her lest
So ceseth love, and forth to love anewe
But whanne yde is done, whoso it rewe
For thow; thefe nil for love hem first to rede
Full sharpe begynnyng byeketh oft at ende

How ofte tyme may e men rede and seme
The tresou that to women hath be don
To what fyne is suche love I can not seme
Or where becommeth it, whan it is go
There is no wyght that wote I trowe so
wher it becometh, lo, no wist on it spareth
That erst was nothynge, into nought toure-
(neth

How besy (yf I love) eke must I be
To plesen hem, that iangle of love, & demen
And coyen hem, that they say no harm of me
For though ther be no cause, yet hem semen
Al be for harme ỳ folke her frendes quemen
And who may stoppen euery wycked tonge
Or soune of beis whyle ỳ they ben ronge

And after that her thought gan for to clere
And sayd, he which ỳ nothyng vndertaketh
Nothyng acheueth, be hym loth or dere
And vh an other though her hert quaketh
Thá slepeth hope, and after drede awaketh
Now hote now cold but thus betwixt twey
She ryste her vp, and went her to pley

Adowne the stayre anonryght tho she went
Into her gardyn with her neces thre
And vp and downe they madé many a went
Flexippe & she, Tarbe, and Antigone
To playen, that it ioye was to se
And other of her women a great route
Her folowed in the garden all about.

This yerd was large, & rayled all the aleyes
& shaddowed wel, vh blosmy bowes grene
And benched newe, and sóded al the wayes
In which she walketh arm in arme betwene
Till at the last Antigone the shene
Gan on a Troyan tonge to syngen clere
That it an heuen was her voyce to heare

Shé sang: O love, to whom I haue, & shall
Vow humble subiect, ferme in myne entent
As I best can, to you lorde yelde all
For euermore my hertes lust to rent
For neuer yet thy grace no wyght sent
So blyssful cause as me, my lyfe to lede
In al ioye and surette out of drede.

The blyssful god hath me so wel beset
In love twys, that all that bereth lyfe
ymagynen ne couthe how to be bet
For lorde withouten ielousye or stryfe
I love one, which that mooste is ententyfe
To serven wel, bitwerlyy or vnfayned
That euer was & lest with harme distayned

As he that is the well of worthynesse
Of trouth ground, myrrour of godlyhed
Of wyt Apollo, stone of sykernesse
Of vertue roote, of lust fynder and hed
Through which is all sorowe fro me ded
ywys I love hym best, so doth he me
Now good thrift haue he, whersoeuer he be

whom shulde I thánken but you god of love
Of all this blysse, in which to bath I gynne
And thanked be ye lorde, for that I love
This is the ryght lyfe that I am in
To flemen al maner vyce and synne
This doth me so to vertue for to entende
That daye by day I in my wyll amende

And who that sayeth ỳ for to love is vyce
Or thraldome, though he fele in it distresse
He eyther is envyous, or ryght nyce
Or is vnmyghty for his sharpnesse
To louen, for suche maner folke I gesse
Dispraisen love, as nothyng of him knowe
They speken, but they ben neuer his bowe

what is the sonne worse of kynde ryght
Though ỳ a man for feblenesse of his eyen
May nat endure on it to se for bryght
Or love the worse, that wretches on it cryen
No wele is worth, ỳ may no sorowe dryen
And for thy, who that hath a herd of herte
Fro cast of stones wate hym in the werre

But with al myne hert and al my myght
As I haue sayde, wol love vnto my last
My dere hert, and all myne owne knyght
In which myne hert growen is so fast
And his in me, that it shall euer last
All dredde I fynde love hym to begyn
Now wot I well there is no peryll in.

And

And of her songe right vñ the worde she stent
And therwithal, nowe nece (q Creseyde)
who made this song, now vñ so good entent
Antygone answerde anone, and sayde
Madame ywys the goodlyest mayde
Of great estate in al the towne of Troye
And led her lyfe in moost honour and ioye

For soth so semeth it by her songe
Quod tho Creseyde, & gan therwith to sike
And said: Lorde is there such bysse amonge
These louers, as they can layne endite
Yea wysse quod fresshe Antygone the whyte
For al the folke that haue or bene on lyue
Ne conne wel the bysse of loue discryue

But wene ye that euery wrecche wote
The parfyte bysse of loue, why nay ywys
They wenen al be loue, yf one be hote
Do way do way, they wote nothing of this
Whenne mote aslken of sayntes, yf it is
Ought faire in heuē, & why: for they can tell
And also fendes, yf it be foule in hell

Creseide vnto the purpose naught answerde
But sayd, ywys it wol be nyght as faste
But euery word, which that she of her herde
She gan to printen in her herte faste
And aye gan loue her lasse for to agaste
Than it dyd erst, and synken in her herte
That she ware somwhat able to conuerte

The dayes honour, and the heuens eye
The nyght foe, al thys clepe I the sunne
Gan westren fast, & dowūwarde for to wrie
As he that had hys dayes course ywunne
And whyte thinges worden dymme & donne
For lacke of lyghte, and sterres for to apere
That she and al her folke in went yfere

So whan it lyked her to gone to reste
And voyded weren they that voyden oughte
She sayd, that to slepen well her leste
Her women sone tyl her bed her broughte
whā al was hust, thā lay she styl & thoughte
Of al thys thynge the maner and the wyse
Reherce it nedeth nat, for ye bene wyse

A nyghtyngale vpon a Cedre grene
Vnder the chamber wal, there as she lay
Ful loude songe ayen the mone shene
Paraventure in hys bryddes wyse a lay
Of loue, that made her herte fresshe and gaye
That herkened she so longe in good entente
Tyl at the last the dreed slepe her hente

And as she slept, anon vyght tho her mette
Howe that an Egle fetthered white as bone
Vnder her brest hys longe clawes sette
And out her hert he rent, and that anone
And dyd his hert in to her brest to gone
of which she nought agrose, ne nothig smert
And forthe he flyeth, with hert leste for herte

Nowe let her slepe, & we our tales holde
Of troylus, that is to paleys rydden
Fro the scarmyshe of whych I tolde
And in hys chambre sate, and hath abydden
Tyl two or thre of his messangers yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him ful fast
Tyl they him found, & brought him at ỳ last

Thys Pandarus came leapyng in at ones
And sayd thus, who hath bene wel ybete
To daye wyth swerdes, and slonge stones
But Troylus, that hath caught him an hete
And gan to iape, & sayd, Lorde ye sweete
But ryse and let vs soupe, and go to reste
And he answerde him, do we as the leste

wyth al the hast goodly as they myght
They spedde hem fro the souper, & to bedde
And euery wyght out of the doze hem dyght
And whyder him lyst, vpō his way him sped
But Troylus thought that his herte bledde
For wo, tyl that he herde some tydynge
And sayd frende, shall I now wepe or synge

(Quod Pandarus) be styll and let me slepe
And do on thyne hoode, thy nedes spedde be
And chese yf thou wolt syng, daunce, or lepe
At shozt wordes thou shalte trowe me
Syr, my nece wol done wel by the
And loue the beste, by god & by my trouthe
But lacke of pursute make it in thy slouthe

For thus forforth I haue thy werke begon
Fro day to daye, tyl this day by the morowe
Her loue of frendshyp haue I to the won
and therfore hath she laid her fauth to borowe
Algate a foote is hameled of thy sorowe
what shulde I lenger sermon of it holde
As ye haue herde before, al he him tolde

But night as floures through the colde of
Iclosed, stoupen in her stalkes low (night
Redyssh hewe ayen the sonne bryght
And spreden in her kynde course by rowe
Right so gan tho his eyen vp to throwe
Thys Troylus, and sayd: O Venus dere
Thy myght thy grace, yheryed be it here

And to Pandarus he held vp both his hondes
And sayd, lorde al thyne be that I haue
For I am hole, and broken ben my bondes
A thousande Troyes, who so that me yaue
Ech after other, god so wys me saue
Ne might me so gladen, lo myne herte
It spredeth so for ioye it wol to sterte

But lord how shall I don how shal I lyuen
whan shal I next my dere herte se
Howe shal this longe time away be dryuen
Tyl that thou be ayen at her fro me
Thou mayst answere, abyde abyde but he
That hangeth by the necke: soth to sayne
In great disease abydeth for the payne

Ylealely nowe, for the loue of Marte
(q Pandarus) for euery thynge hath tyme
So longe abyde, tyll that the nyght departe
For al so syker as thou lyest here by me
And god to sonne, I wol be there at prime
And for thy werke somwhat, as I shal saye
Or on some other wyght thys charge laye

For parde god wot, I haue euer yet
Ben redy the to serue, and this nyght
Haue I nat fayned, but enforth my wyt
Done al thy lust, and shal with al my myght
Do nowe as I shal sayne, and fare aryght
And yf thou wyt, wyte al thy selfe thy care
On me is naught alonge thyne yuel fare

wote wel that thou wyser art than I
I thousande folde: but yf I were as thou
God helpe me so, as I wolde verely
Right of myne owne hande write her nowe
A lettre, in whiche I wolde her tellen howe
I farde amyssse, and her beseche of routh
Nowe helpe thy selfe, & leaue it for no slouth

And I my selfe shal therwyth to her gon
And whā thou woldē ꝑ I am with her there
Worth thou vp on a courser ryght anon
Ther hardely, ryght in thy beste gere
And ride forth by ꝑ place, as naught ne were
And thou shalt fynde vs (if I may) syttyng
At sonne wyndowe, in to the strete lokyng

And yf the lyst, than mayst thou vs salue
And vpon me make thou thy countenaunce
But by thy lyfe bewarre, and take kepynge
to taryen ought, god shyld vs fro mischaūce
Ride forth thy waye & holde thy gouernaūce
And we shall speke of the sondrydat I trowe
whan thou art gone, to do thyn erres glowe

Touchyng thy lettre thou arte wyse ynough
I wot thou nylt it deuyse ryght endyte
As maketh it with these argumentes tough
Ne scryueynysshe or craftely thou it write
Beblotte it with thy teeres the alyte
And thou write a goodly worde al softe
Though it be good, reherse it not to ofte

For though the best harpour vpon lyue
Wolde on the beste sowned ioly harpe
That euer was, with al hys fyngers fyue
Touch aye o stryng, or aye o warble harpe
were hys nayles poynted neuer so sharpe
It shulde make euery wyght to dull
To here his gle, and of his strokes full

Ne tombre eke no discordaūs thing ylyke
As thus, to vsen termes of physyke
In loues termes holde of thy matere
The forme alway, and do that it be lyke
For yf a peyntour wolde paynte a pyke
with alles fete, and berded as an ape
It sholdeth nat, to were it but a tape

Thus counsayle, lyked wel vnto Troylus
But as a dredeful louer, he sayd thys
Alas my dere brother Pandarus
I am ashamed for to write ywys
Lest of myne innocence I sayd amys
Or that she nolde it for dispyte receyue
thā were I deed, ther might nothing weyue

To that Pandare answerde, yf the lest
Do that I saye, and let me therwyth gon
For by that lorde that formed erst and west
I hope of it to bringe answere anon
Right of her hande, & yf that thou nylt non
Let be, and sory mote he ben hys lyue
Ayenst thy lust, that helpeth the to thryue

Quod

(Quod Troylus) depardieux yelpe allyte
Lyth that the lyst, I wol aryse and wryte
And blyssful god pray yelpe with good entente
The ymage and the lettre I shal endyte
So spede it, and thou Cytherea the whyte
Pene than me wyt, my lettre to deuyse
Gif him down, a wrote right in this wyse

Lyst he gan her his right lady call
His herres lyfe, his lust, his lyuynges leche
His blysse, and eke these other termes all
That in such case ye louers al seche
And in ful humble wyse, as in his speche
He gan hym recómaunde vnto her grace
To rel al howe, it asketh moche space

And after thys full lowly he her prayde
To be nought wroth, though he of hys folye
So hardy was to her to wryte, and sayde
That loue it made, or els must he dye
And pitously gan mercy for to crye
And after that he sayd, and lyed full loude
Hym selfe was lytle worth, & lasse he couthe

And that she wolde haue his cóning excused
That lytle was, and eke he dredde h: lo
And his vnworthynesse aye he accused
And after that than gan he tel his wo
But that was endelesse wythouten go
And sayd, he wold in trouth alwey him hold
And redde it ouer, and gan the lettre fold

And with his salte teeres gan he bath
The Ruby in his Seignet, and it sette
Upon the were deliuerlyche and rath
Therwith a thousande tymes, er he lette
He lyste tho the lettre that he shette
And sayd, lettre a blyssful destyne
The shapen is, my lady shal the se

Thys Pandare tobe the lettre, & that betime
I trowe we, and to hys maysters paleys sterte
And fast he swore, that it was passed prime
And gan to rape, and sayd: ywys myne herte
So frelhe it is, although it sore smerte
I may nat slepe neuer a Wayes mo for we
I haue a lolye wo, a lusty sorowe

Creseyde, whan that she her vncle herde
Wyth dredeful herte, and desyrous to here
The cause of his cómyng, thus answerde
Now by your fayth myn vncle (quod she) dere
What maner wyndes gydeth you nowe here
Tel vs your lolye wo, and your penaunce
Howe ferforth be ye put in louers daunce

By god (quod he) I hope alwaye behynde
And to laugh, it thought her herte best
(Quod Pándarus) loke alway that ye fynde
Game in myn hood, but herkeneth if you lest
Ther is ryght now come in to ỳ town a gest
A grete clyppe, and telleth newe thynges
For whych I come to tel you new tydynges

In to the gardyn go we, and ye shal here
Al pleynly of thys a longe sermoun
With that they went arme in arme yfere
In to the gardyn fro the chambre doun
And whan he was so farre, that the soun
Of that he spake, no man heren myght
He sayd her thus, and out the lettre plyght

Lo, he that is al hooly yours free
Hym recómendeth lowly to your grace
And sent you thys lettre here by me
Auyseth you on it, whan ye han space
And of some goodly answere you purchace
Or helpe me god so, playnly for to sayne
He may not longe lyuen for his payne

Ful dredefully tho gan she stande styll
And toke it not, but al her humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and sayd scripte nor byl
For loue of god, that toucheth such matere
Ne bringe me none, and also vncle dere
To myne estate haue more regarde I pray
Than to his lust, what shulde I more say

And loketh nowe yf this be reasonable
And letteth not for fauour ne for slouth
To sayne a soth, nowe it is couenable
To myne estate, by god and by my trouth
To take it, or to haue of him routh
In harmyng of my selfe, or in repreue
Beare it ayen, for him that ye on leue

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare
And sayd, nowe is this the greatest wonder
That euer I sawe, let be this nyce fare
To deth mote I smytten be with thonder
If for the clyye, whych standeth yonder
Wolde I a lettre vnto you bringe or take
To harm of you: what lyst you thus it make

But

Wel thus ye seuen inch myghe al and some
That he that maketh desyreth you to serue
Of him ye retche left where he bestume
And whether that he leue, or elis sterue
But fro al that, that euer I may deserue
Refuse it not (q he) and bente her fast
And in her bosom ỳ letter thrust he thanne

And sayd her, nowe caste it away anon
That folke may tene, & gaume an hy euery
(Quod she) I can abyde tyl they be gon
And gan to smyle, & sayd him, eme I pray
Spyche answere as you list your selfe purvey
For trewly I wol no lettre write
No than wol I (quod he) so ye endyte

Therewith she lough, and sayd go we dyne
And he gan at hym selfe laye faste
And sayd neece, I haue so great a pyne
For loue, that euerych other day I faste
And gan his brest sapes forthe to caste
And made her so to laugh at his folye
That she for laughter wende for to dye

And whan that she was comen in to the hall
Nowe eme (q she) we wol go dyne anon
And gan some of her women to her call
And streyght in to her chambre gan she gone
But of her besynesses this was one
Amonges other thynges, out of drede
Ful prively this lettre for to rede

Auyled worde by worde in euery lyne
And fonde no lacke, she thought he couthe his
And vp it put & went her in to dyne (goode
And Pandarus, that in a study stoode
Ere he was ware, she toke him by the hoode
And sayd, ye were caught ere that ye wyste
I vouchesafe (quod he) do what you lyste

Tho wyschen they, and set hem downe & ete
And after noone ful slyghly Pandarus
Gan drawe him to ỳ wyndowe nye the strete
And sayd neece, who hath arayed thus
The yonder house, that stante afore yene vs
Which house (q she) and gan for to beholde
And knewe it wel, & who it was him tolde

And fellen forth in speche of thynges smale
And saten in the wyndowe both twey
Whan Pandarus sawe tyme vnto his tale
And sawe wel that her folke were al away
Nowe neece myne tel on (quod he) I pray
Howe lyke you the lettre that ye wote
Can he theron, for by my trouth I not

Therwyth al rosy he wexed tho wore she
And gan to hym, and sayd, so I trowe
Aquyte him wel for goddes loue (q he)
Why seist to medes wol the lettre sowe
And helde his handes by, and sate on knees
Nowe good neece, be it neuer so lyte
Yeue me the labour, it is sowe and plyte

Ye a, for I can so write (q she) tho
And eke I not what I shulde to hym say
Nay neece (q Pandare) say not so
Yet at the leste thonketh him I pray
Of his good wyl: O, doth hym not to dey
Nowe for the loue of me my neece dere
Refuseth not at this tyme my prayere

Depardieux (q she) god leue all be wele
God helpe me so, this is the fyrst lettre
That euer I wrote, yet al or any dele
And in to a closet for to auyse her bette
She went alone, and gan her best auyse
Out of Dayres prison, but a lyte
And sette downe, and gan a lettre write

Of which to tell in short is myne entent
The effecte as ferre as I can vnderstonde
She thanked him of al that he wel ment
Towardes her, but holden him in honde
She wolde not make her selues bonde
In loue, but as his syster him to plese
She wold aye fayne, to done his best an ese

She shette it, and to Pandare in to gon
There as he sate, and loked in to strete
And downe she sette her by him on a stone
Of iaspre, vpon a quysshen of golde ybete
And sayde, as wysly help me god the gret
I neuer dyd a thyng with more payne
Than write this, to which ye me constrayne

And toke it hym: He thanked her, and sayd
God wote of thyng ful often loth begonne
Cometh ende good: and neece myne Creseyde
That ye to him of harde nowe bene ywonne
Ought he be glad, by god and yonder sonne
For why, men sayth impressions lyghte
Full lyghtly ben ay redy to the flyghte

But

But ye han played the tyraunt al to longe
And harde was it youre herte for to graue
Nowe stynt that ye no lenger on it honge
Al wolden ye the fourme of daunger saue
But hasteth you to done hym ioye haue
For trusteth wel, to longe ydone hardnesse
Causeth dispyte ful often for distresse

And right as they declared thys matere
Lo Troylus, right at the stretes ende
Came ryding wyth his tenthe some yfere
Al softely, and thyderward gan bende
Ther as they sat, as was his way to wende
To paleys ward, And Pandare him aspide
And sayd, nece I se who cometh here ryde

O, fye nat in he sethe vs I suppose
Leste he maye thynken that ye hym eschue
Nay nay, q she, & wore as redde as rose
wyth that he gan her humbly salue
wyth dredful chere, and oft hys hewes mue
And vp hys loke debonairly he caste
And beheld on Pandare, & forthe by paste

God wot yf he sate on his horse aryght
Or goodly was beseme that yike daye
God wot wher he were lyke a maly knyght
what shulde I dis tethe, or tell of his aray
Certeyde, which that all these thynges say
To tel in shorte, her lyked al yfere
hys person, hys aray, his loke, his chere

His goodly maner, and his gentylesse
So wel, that neuer syth that she was borne
Ne had she such routh of his distresse
And how so, she hath hard ben here beforne
to god hope I, she hath now caught a thorn
She shal not pul it out this nert wyke
God sende me such thornes on to pyke

Pandare, whyche that stode her faste by
Felte vton hoste, and he beganne to smyte
And sayd, nece I pray you herterly
Tel me that I shal aske you alyte
I woman that were of hys deth to whyte
without gilt, but for her lacke of routh
were it wel done, q she, nay by my trouth

God help me so, q he, ye say me soth
Ye frien wel your selfe that I naught lye
Lo, yonder he ryderh, q she, ye so he doth
wel q Pandare, as I haue tolde you thne
Let be your nyce shame, and your folye
And spek with him, in eyssyng of his herte
Let nyce te not do you both smerte

But theron was to heauen and to done
Consydryng al thyng, it may nat be
And why, for shame, and it were eke to sone
To graunten him so great a liberte
For playnly her entent, as (sayd she)
was for to loue hym vnwyst, yf she myght
And guerdon him vb notbig but with syght

But Pandare thought, it shall not be so
If that I may, thys nyce opinyon
Shal not ben holden fully yeres two
what shuld I make of thys a long sermone
He muste assent on that conclusion
As for the tyme, and whan that it was eue
And al was wel, he rose and toke hys leue

And on his way faste homwarde he sped
And right for ioye he felt his herte daunce
And Troylus he founde alone abed
That lay, as done these louers in a traunce
Betwixen hope and derke dispeyraunce
But Pandare, right at hys in comyng
He song as who sayth, lo, somwhat I bring

And sayd, who is in his bed so sone
yburyed thus, it am I frende (q he)
who Troylus nay, helpe me so the moone
(q Pandarus) thou shalt vp ryse and se
A charme that was sent right nowe to the
The which can healen the of thyne aresse
If thou do forthwith al thy besynesse

ye through the myght of god (q Troylus)
And Pandarus gan him the letter take
And sayde, parde god hath holpen vs
Haue here a lyght, and loke on al these blake
But ofte gan the hert glade and quake
Of Troylus, whyle he it gan to rede
So as the wordes gaue him hope or drede

But finally he toke al for the beste
That she him wrote for somwhat he beheld
on which he thought he might hys hert rest
Al couered she the wordes vnder sheide
Thus to the more worthy parte he heide
That what for hope, & Pãdarus beheste
Hys great wo forgede he at the leste

But

But as we may al day our seluen se
Through wood or coole the more fyre
Right so encrease of hoope, of what it be
Therwyth he full ofte encreaseth ese desyre
Or as an ok cometh of a lytle syre
so through this lettre, whiche ꝑ she him sent
Encrealen gan desyre of which he brent

wherfore I say alway, that day & nyght
This Troylus gan to desyren, more
Than he dyd erste through hoope, & did his
To preasó on, as by Pãdarus lore (myght
And writen to her of his sorowes sore
Fro day to day, he lete it nought refreyde
That by Pãdare he somwhat wrote or seid

And dyd also his other obseruaunces
That tyll a louer longeth in thys caas
And after that his dyce turned on chaunces
So was he eyther glad or sayd alas
And helde after hys gestes aye his paas
And after such answers as he had
So were his dayes sory eyther glad

But to Pãdare was alwaye his recours
And pytously gan aye on him to playne
And him besought of rede & some socours
And Pãdarus, that saw his wode payne
Wer wel nygh dred for routh, forth to sayne
And besyly with al his herte caste
Some of his wo to sleen, and that as faste

And sayd, Lorde & frende, & brother dere
God wote that thy disease doth me wo
But wyst thou fynden al this woful chere
And by my trouth, er it be dayes two
And god to sone, yet shal I shape it so
That thou shalt come in to a certayne place
Ther as ꝑ maist thy selfe prayen for grace

And certaynly I not yf thou it woste
But they that bene experte in loue, it say
It is one of the thynges foutereth moste
A man to haue a leyser for to pray
And fyxer place, his wo for to bewray
for in good hert it mote some routh impresse
To here and se the gyltelesse in distresse

Paraũture thinkest thou, though it be so
That lande wolde her done for to begynne
To haue a maner routh vpon my wo
Sayth dauger nay, ꝑ shalt me neuer winne
So ruleth her hertes goste within
That though she bende, yet she stont on rote
what in effecte is thys vnto my bote

Thinke here ayen, whan that the sturdy ok
On which men hacketh ofte for the nones
Receyued hath the happy fallyng stroke
The great sweyght doth it come all at ones
As done these rockes, or these myne stones
for swyftest course cometh thig ꝑ is of wigte
whan it descendeth, than done thinges light

But rede that bideth down for euery blast
Ful lygtely cesse wynde, it wol aryse
But so nyl not an ok, whan it is cast
It nedeth me nought longe the forbyde
Men shal reioysen of a great empryse
Atcheued wel, and stant withouten dout
Al haue men ben the lenger there about

But Troylus, nowe tell me yf the lest
A thyng which that I shal aske the
which is thy brother that thou louest best
As in thy very hertes preuyte
I wys my brother Dyephebus, tho (q he)
Now q Pãdare er houres twyse twelue
Ye shal the case, bewyst of it him selue

Nowe let me alone, and worken as I may
(Quod he) and to Dyephebus went he tho
which had his lord, & great frende bene aye
Saue Troylus no man he loued so
To tel in shorte, without wordes mo
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cause, which that toucheth me

Yes parde q Dyephebus wel thou wost
Al that euer I may, and god to fore
Al were it but for the man I loue moste
Thy brother Troylus, but say wherfore
It is, for syth the day that I was bore
I nas me neuer mo to bene I thynke
Ayenst a thyng that myght the forthynke

Pãdare gan him thanke, and to him sayd
Lo sir, I haue a lady in thys towne
That is my nece, and called is Creseyd
which some men wolde done oppression
And wrongfully haue her possession
wherfore I of your lordshyp you beseche
To bene our frende, withouten more speche

Dyephebus

Deiphebus hym answerde: O, is not thys
That thou spekest of to me thus straungely
Creseyde my frende? He sayd hym yes
Then nedeth (q Deiphebus) hardely
Nomore of this to speke, for trusteth wel ꝑ I
Will be her champion wyth spore and yerde
I ne rought not though al her foes it herde

But tel me howe, for thou wost thys matere
I myght best auayle, nowe let se
(Quod Pandarus) yf ye my lorde so dere
Wolden as now do thys honour to me
To prayen her to morowe, so that she
Came vnto you, her playntes to deuyse
Her aduersaryes wolde of it agryse

And yf I more durst praye as nowe
And chargen you to haue so great trauayle
To haue some of your brethré here with you
That myghten to her cause her auayle
Then wote I well she myght neuer fayle
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce
What wyth her other frendes gouernaunce

Deiphebus whych ꝑ comen was of kynde
To all honoure and bounte to consente
Answerde, it shalbe done: And I can fynde
Yet greater helpe to thys in myne entent
What woldest ꝑ layne, yf for Heleyne I sent
To speake of thys, I trowe it be the best
For the maye leden Paris as her lest

Of Hector, whych ꝑ is my lorde my brother
It nedeth not to praye hym frende to be
For I haue herde hym, o tyme and eke other
Spoken of Creseyde such honour, that he
May layne no bet, such hap to hym hath she
It nedeth not hys helpes more craue
He shalbe suche, ryght as we wol hym haue

Speake thou thy selfe also to Troylus
On my behalfe, and praye hym with vs dyne
Syr, all thys shalbe done (q Pandarus)
And toke hys leaue, and neuer gan to fyne
But to hys neces house as streyght as lyne
He came, & founde her fro the meate aryse
And set hi downe, & spake ryght in this wyse

He sayd, O very God, so haue I ioye
Lo nece myne, se ye not howe I swete
I not where ye the more thanke me conne
Be ye not ware howe false Poliphete
Is nowe about chrysones for to plete
And bringe on you aduocacies newe?
I, no (q she) and chaunged al her hewe

what is he more about me to dretche
And done me wronge, what shal I don, alas
Yet of hym selfe nothynge wolde I retche
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas
That ben hys frendes in such maner caas
But for the loue of god, myne vncle dere
No force of that, let hym haue all yfere

wythouten that, I haue ynough for vs
Nay (q Pandare) it shall nothynge be so
For I haue ben tryght nowe at Deiphebus
At Hector, and myne other lordes mo
And shortly maked eche of hem hys foe
That by my thryfte, he shall it neuer wynne
For ought he can, when so that he begynne

And as they casten what was best to done
Deiphebus, of hys owne curtesye
Came her to praye in hys propre persone
To holde hym on the morowe company
At dyner, whych she nolde not denye
But goodly gan to hys prayer obey
He thanked her, and wente vpon hys wey

when thys was done, thys Pandare anone
To tell in shorte, and forth he gan to wende
To Troylus, as styll as any stone
And al thys thyng he tolde him word & ende
And howe that he Deiphebus gan to blende
And sayd hym, nowe is tyme yf ꝑ ye conne
To beare the well to morowe, & al is wonne

Now spike, now praye, now pitously cõplain
Let not for nyce shame, drede, or slouthe
Sometyme a man mote tell hys owne payne
Beleue it, and he wol haue on the routhe
Thou shalt ben saued by thy fayth in trouthe
But well wote I, thou nowe arte in a drede
And what it is, I say that I can rede

Thou thinkest now, how should I don al this
For by my cheres musten folke aspye
That for her loue is, that I fare amys
Yet had I leuer vnwyst for sorowe dye
Nowe thynke not so, for thou doest gret folye
For I tryght nowe haue founden a manere
Of sleyght, for to couere all thy chere

Thou shalt gone ouernight, & that bylyue
Unto Deiphebus house, as the to play
Thy maladye away the bet to wryue
For whych thou semest sycke soth for to saye
Sone after that, in thy bedde the laye
And saye thou mayst no lenger vp endure
And lye ryght there, and byde thyne auenture

Say that thy feuer is wóte the for to take
The same tyme, and lasse tyl a morowe
And let se nowe how wel thou canst it make
For parde sycke is he that is in sorowe
Go now farewell, & Uenus here to borowe
I hope and thou thys purpose holde fermme
Thy grace she shall fully there conferme

(Quod Troylus) y wys thou nedelesse
Counsaylest me, that sycklyche I me fayne
For I am sycke in ernest doutelesse
So that well nygh I sterue for the payne
(q Pandarus) thou shalte the better playne
And haste the lesse nede to counterfete
For hym demeth mé hote, þ seeth hem swete

Lo, holde the at thy tryste close, and I
Shall well the deere vnto thy bowe dryue
Therwyth he toke hys leaue al softely
And Troylus to paleys went blyue
Ne glad ne was he neuer in all hys lyue
And to Pandarus rede gan all assente
And to Deiphebus house at nyght he wente

what nedeth it you to tellen all the chere
That Deiphebus vnto hys brother made
Or hys aras, or hys sycklyche manere
Howe men gon hym with clothes for to lade
whe he was layd, & how mé would him glade
But al for nought, he held forth aye the wyfe
That ye han herde Pandare er thys deuyse

But certayne is, er Troylus hym leyde
Deiphebus had prayde hym ouernyght
To ben a frende, and helpynge to Creseyde
God wote that he graunted anone ryght
To ben her full frende with all hys myght
But lucky a nede was it to praye hym therto
As for to bydde a woode man to renne

¶ The morwe came, & neygben gan þ tyme
Of nyght, that she fayre quene Helayne
Shoge hir to be an houre after prime
With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde fayne
But as hys suster, homely soth to sayne
She came to dyner, in her playne entente
But god & Pádare wyst al what this mente

Came eke Creseyde all innocent of thys
Antygone her nece, and Tarbe also
But syre we nowe prolixite best is
For loue of god, and let vs fast go
Right to the fresshe worthouen tales mo
why all thys folke assembled in thys place
And let vs of her salutynges pace

Great honour dyd hem Deiphebus certayne
And fedde hem wel, with al that myght lyke
But euermo alas, was hys restrayne
Wy good brother Troylus the syke
Lyth yet, and therwyth all he gan to syke
And after that he payned hym to glade
Hem as he myght, and there good he made

Complayned eke Helayne of hys sycknesse
So fayrthfully that it pyte was to here
And euery wyght gan weren for ares
A leche anone, and sayd in thys maniere
Wen euen folke, thys charme I woll þ lere
But there sate one, all lyste her not to teche
That thought, yet best could I ben his leche

After cóplaynt hym gonné they to playse
As folk don yet whe some wyght hath begó
To playse a má, and wyth playse hym rayse
A thousande folde yet hyghter thé the son
He is, he can, that fewe lolkes kon
And Pandarus of that they wolde allerme
He nought forgat her playsynge to conferme

Herde al thys thyng Creseyd wel ynough
And euery worde gan for to notifye
For wbych wyth lobe there her herte lough
For who is that ne wolde her gloryfye
To mé wen seche a knyght done lyue or dye
But all passe I, lest ye to longe dwell
But for to fyne is all that euer I tell

The tyme came fro dyner for to ryse
And as hem ought, aryseu euerychone
And gone a whyle of thys and that deuyse
But Pandarus brake all thys speche anone
And sayd to Deiphebus, woll ye gone
yf your wyll be, as I you prayde.
To speake of the nedes of Creseyde

Helayne

Heleyne, whych that by ỳ honde her helde
Toke fyrst the tale and sayd, go we blyue
And goodly on Creseyde she beheldē
And sayd, Ioues let hym neuer thryue
That doth you harme, & ryue hym sone of
And ye me sorowe, but he shall it rue (lyue
yf that I maye, and all folke be true

Tel thou thy neces cause (quod Deiphebus)
To Pandarus, for thou canst best it tell
My lordes and my ladyes, it stante thus
what shulde I lenger (q̄ he) do you dwell
He ronge hem out a proces lyke a bell
Upon her foe, that hyght Poliphete
So heynous, that men myght on it spete

Answerd of this eche worse of hem thē other
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien
Ihonged be suche one, were he my brother
And so he shall, for it ne maye nought varien
what shulde I lenger in this tale taryen
Plarnlyche all at ones they her hyghten
To ben her frēde, in all ỳ euer they myghten

Spake then Heleyne, and sayd Pandarus
wote aught my lord my brother of thys ma
I meane Hector, or wote it Troylus (ter
He sayd yea, but woll ye me nowe here
Me thynketh thus, syth that Troilus is here
It were good, yf that ye wolde assent
She tolde hym her selfe all thys er she went

For he woll haue the more her grefe at herte
Because so that she a lady is
And by your wyl, I woll but in ryght sterte
And do you wete, and that anone ywys
yf that he slepe, or woll ought here of thys
And in he lepte, and sayd hym in hys eere
God haue thy soule, brought haue I thy here

To smylen of thys gan tho Troylus
And Pandarus wyth outen reke nynge
Out went anone to Heleyne & Deiphebus
And sayd hem, so there be no taryenge
Me more preasse, he woll well that ye bryngē
Creseyde my lady, that is here
And as he maye endure n, he wol her here

But well ye wote the chambre is but lyte
And fewe folke may lyghtly make it warme
Nowe loketh ye, for I woll haue no wyte
To bryng in preasse, ỳ might don hym harme
Or hym dyseasen, for my better arme
Yet were it bet the bydde tyll eftsoonis
Nowe loke ye that knowen what to done is

I saye for me best is, as I can knowe
That no wyght in ne wende, but ye twey
But it were I, for I can in a throwe
Reherce her case, vnlyke that she can sey
And after thys she maye ones hym prey
To ben good lorde in shorte, & take her leue
Thys maye not mokell of hys ease hym reue

And eke for she is straūge, he woll forbere
Hys ease, whych that hym dare not for you
Eke other thynge that toucheth not to her
He woll it tell, I wote it well ryght nowe
That secrete is, and for the townes prowe
And they that knewe nothyng of hys entent
wythout more, to Troylus in they went

Heleyne in all her goodly softe wyse
Gan hym salue, and womanly to playe
And sayd ywys, ye mote algate arryse
Nowe sayre brother be all hole I praye
And gan her arme ryght ouer hys sholder laye
And hym wyth all her wyt to recomforte
As she best coulde, she gan hym to dysporte

So after thys (q̄ she) we you beseke
My dere brother Deiphebus and I
For loue of God, and so doth Pandare eke
To ben good lorde and frende ryght hertely
Unto Creseyde, whych that certaynly
Recreueth wrōge, as wote wel here Pādare
That can her case well bet then I declare

This Pādarus gan new his tonge affyle
And all her case reherce, and that anone
when it was sayd, sone after a whyle
(Quod Troylus) as sone as I may gone
I wol ryght fayne, with al my might be one
Haue god my trouth, her cause to sustene
Now good thryft haue ye (q̄ Heleyne) the (quene
(Quod Pandarus) and it your wyll be
That she maye take her leaue, er that she go
O, els god forbyd it (tho q̄ he)
yf that she vouchsafe for to do so
And wyth that worde (q̄ Troylus) ye two
Deiphebus, and my syster lefe and dere
To you haue I to speake of a matere

To ben adwysed by your rede the better
And founde (as hap was) at his beddes heed
The coppe of a treatyse, and a lettre
That Hector had hym sent, to aske reed
yf suche a man was worthy to ben deed
wote I nought who, but in a grysly wyse
he prayde hem anone on it auyse

Delyphebus gan thys lettre for to vnfolde
In ernest great, so dyd Heleyne the quene
And comynge outward, fast it gone beholde
Downewarde a steyre, into an herber grene
Thys ylke thynge redden hem bytwene
And largely the mountenaunce of an houre
They gonne on it to reden and to poure

Nowe let hem rede, and turne we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full softe pype
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the great chambre, and that in hye
And sayd, god saue all thys companye
Come nece myne, my lady quene Heleyne
Abydeth you, and eke my lordes tweyne

Ryse, take wyth you your nece Antigone
Or whome you lyst, or no force hardely
The lasse preasse ye bet, come forth wyth me
And loke that ye thanken humbly
hem all thre, and when ye maye goodly
Your tyme yse, taketh of hem your leue
Lest we to longe hys restes hym bereue

All innocent of Pandarus entente
(Quod tho Creseyde) go we vncle dere
And arme in arme, inwarde tho hem the were
Auysynge well her wordes and her chere
And Pandarus, in ernestfull manere
Sayd, all folke for goddes loue I praye
Beyuteth ryght here, and softely you playe

Auyseth you what folke bene here wythin
And in what plyte one is, god hym amende
And inwarde thus full softely begyn
Nece I conjure, and hyghly you defende
On hys halfe, whych that soule vs al sende
And in the vertue of coronynes twayne
Slee not thys man, ye hath for you this payne

Fye on the deuell, thynke whych one he is
And in what plyte he lyeth, come of anone
Thynke all suche tarryed tyde but lost it nys
That woll ye both sayne, when ye ben one
Secondly, there yet deuyneth none
Upon you two, come of nowe yf ye conne
whyle folke is blent, lo, all the tyme is wone

In tyterynge and pursute, and delayes
The folke deuyne, at waggynge of a tree
And though ye wolde han after mery dayes
Then dare ye not, and why? for she and she
Spake suche a worde, thus loked he and he
Lest tyme be lost, I dare not wyth you bide
Come of therfore, and bryngeth hym to hide

But nowe to you, ye louers that ben here
was Troylus not in a cankedore
That lay, & might ye whysprynge of hem here
And thought o lorde, ryght now reneth my sore
Fully to dye, or haue anone comfore
And was the fyrst tyme he shulde her pray
Of loue, O myghty god what shall he saye

Explicit liber secundus.



Bryght full lyght, of which the beames clere
Adorneth all the thyrde heuen fayre
O sonnes lefe, o Jouis doughter dere
Pleasaunce of loue, o goodly debonayre
In gentyll hertes aye redy to repayre
O very cause of heale and of gladnesse
yheryed be thy myght and thy goodnesse

Jn heauen and hell, in erthe, and salte see
Is felte thy myght, yf that I well dyscerne
As man, beest, fysshe, herbe, and grene tree
The fele in tymes wyth vapour eterne
God loueth, and to loue wold nought werne
And in thys worlde no lyues creature
wythouten loue is worth, or maye endure

Ye Jones fyrst, to thylke affectes glade
Through wyych that thynges lyuen al, & be
Commenden, and amorous hem made
On mortall thynge, and as you lyst aye ye
Yeue hem in loue, ese, or aduersyte
And in a thousand formes doune hym sente
For loue in erth, & whom you lyste he hente

ye

ye fyrſte Marce apealen of hys yre
And as you lyſt, ye maken hertes dygne
Algates hem that ye woll ſet afyre
They dreden ſhame, and vyces they reſygne
Ye done hem curteys be, freſhe, & benigne
And hye or lowe, after a wyght entendeth
The lopes þ he hath, your myght it ſendeth

Ye holden reygne and houſe in vnite
Ye ſothfaſt cauſe of frendſhyp ben alſo
Ye knowen all thylke couered qualyte
Of thynges, whych that folke wondren ſo
When they can not conſtrue howe it may go
Why louyth hym, or why he loueth here
Is why this fythe & not that cometh to were

Ye folke a lawe haue ſet in vniuerſe
And thys knowe I by hem that louers be
That who ſo ſtryueth wh you hath þ werſe
Swete lady bryght, for thy benignite
In reuerence of hem that ſeruen the
Whoſe clerke I am, ſo techeth me deuyſe
Some ioye of that is felt in thy ſeruyce

Yea, in my naked herte ſentement
I bylde, and do me the we of thy ſwetneſſe
Caliope, thy voyce be nowe preſent
For nowe is nede, ſtreſſ thou not my dyſtreſſe
Nowe I mote tell anone ryght the gladneſſe
Of Troylus, to Venus heryinge
To whych who nede hath, god hym bryinge.

¶ Incipit liber tertius.



Ly all thys meane whyle Troylus
Recordynge hys leſſon in thys maniere
Hafer thought he, thus woll I ſay and thus
Thus woll I playne vn-
to my lady dere
That worde is good, & thys ſhalbe my chere
Thys nyll I not forfeten in no wyſe
God leue hym werken as he can deuyſe

And lorde ſo that hys herte gan to quappe
Heryinge her come, and ſhorte for to ſyke
And Pandarus that ledde her by the lappe
Came nere, and gan in at the curteyn pyke
And ſayd, god do bote on all ſyke
He who is here, you comen to byſyte

Lo, here is ſhe that is your death to wyte

Therwyth it ſemed as he wepte almoſte
A, a, (quod Troylus) ſo routhfully
Where me be wo, o myghty god thou woſte
Who is all there, I ſe not truly
Syr (q Creſeyde) it is Pandare and I
Ye ſwete herte alas, I maye not ryſe
To kneie, and do you honoure in ſome wyſe

And dreſſed hym vpwarde, & the ryght tho
Gan both her hondes ſofte vpon hym ley
O for the loue of god, do ye not ſo
To me (quod ſhe) ey what is thys to ſey
Syr, comen am I to you for cauſes twey
Fyrſt you to thanke, and of your lordſhyp eke
Continuaunce I wolde you beſeke

Thys Troylus that herde hys lady praye
Of lordſhip, hym wore neither quicke ne deed
Ne myght a worde for ſhame to it ſaye
All though men ſhulden ſmyten of hys heed
But lorde ſo he wore ſodeynly ye reed
And eyr, hys leſſon that he wende conne
To prayen her, is through hys wyt yronne

Creſeyde all thys aſpyed well ynough
For ſhe was wyſe, & loued hym neuer þ laſſe
All were he in all aperte, or made it tough
Or was to bolde, to ſynge a foole a maſſe
But when hys ſhame gan ſomwhat to paſſe
Hys reſons, as I may my rymes holde
I woll you tell, as techen bokes olde

In chaunged voyce, ryght for hys very drede
Whych voyce ſhe quoke, & therto hys maniere
Goodly abaſht, and nowe hys hewes rede
Nowe pale, vnto Creſeyde hys lady dere
Wyth loke downe caſt, & humble yolde chere
Lo, the alderfyrſt worde that hym after
Was mercy, mercy, ſwete herte

And ſtynt a while, & whē he might out bring
The nexte worde was, god wote for I haue
As faythfully as I haue had konnynge
Ben yours all, god ſo my ſoule ſaue
And that, eyr that I wofull wyght be graue
And though I dare ne can vnto you playne
Iwys I ſuffre not the laſſe payne

Thus moch as nowe, ah, womanlyche wyſe
I maye out bryinge, and yf thys you dyſpleſe

That shall I wreke vpon myne owene lyfe
Ryght sone I trowe, and do your hert an ese
yf wyth my death, your herte maye apese
But sens that ye han herde me somwhat fey
Nowe rede I neuer howe sone that I dey

Therwyth hys manly sorowe to beholde
It myght haue made an hert of stone to rewe
And Pandare wept as he to water wolde
And pouped euer hys nece newe and newe
And sayd, woo begon ben hertes trewe
For loue of god, make of thys thinge an ende
Or slee vs both at ones, er that ye wende

I, what (q̄ she) by God and by my trouth
I not nat what ye wyne that I fey
Cy, what (q̄ he) that ye haue on hym routh
For goddes loue, and doth hym not to dey
Nowe then thus (q̄ she) I wolde hym prey
To tell me the fyne of hys entente
Yet wyst I neuer well what that he mente

what that I meane, O swete herte dere
(Quod Troylus) o goodly freshe fere
That wyth the fyres of your eyen clere
Ye wolden somtyme frendly on me se
And then agreen that I may ben he
wythouten braunche of vyce, on any wyse
In trouth al waye, to do you my seruyse

As to my lady ryght, and chefe reliefe
wyth all my wyte and all my diligence
And to haue ryght as you lyst comforte
Vnder your yerde egall to myne offence
As death, yf that I breake your defence
And that ye deygne me so moche honour
Ye to comaunden ought in any hour

And I to ben your very humble trewe
Secrete, and in my payenes pacient
And euer to ben fresh freshly newe
To serue, and to ben aye ylike diligent
And wyth good herte, al holy your talent
Receyuen wel, howe sore that me smerte
Lo, this meane I, myne owene swete herte

(Quod Pandarus) lo here an hard requeste
And resonable, a lady for to wearne
Nowe nece myne, by Natall Jones feste
were I a god, ye shulde serue as yerne
That heren wel this man wol nothyng yerne
But your honour, ye sene hym almost sterue
And ben so lothe to suffre hym you to serue

wyth that she gan her eyen on hym caste
Full esely, and full debonairly
Auysyng her, and hyed not to faste
wyth neuer a worde, but sayd hym softely
Vnto honour safe, I wolde wel truly
And in such forme, as I can nowe deuyse
Receyuen him fully to my seruice

Beseechyng hym for goddes loue, that he
wolde in honour of trouthe and gentilesse
As I wel meane, me meanen wel to me
And myn honour, wyth wit and besynesse
Eye kepe, and if I maye done him gladnesse
From hence forthe, swych I nyl nat fayne
Nowe beche al hole, no lenger ye ne playne

But natheiesse, this warne I you (q̄ she)
Aduyses sonne although ye be swych
ye shal no more haue soueraynte
Of me in loue, than right in that case is
Ne nyl to beare it that ye done amys
To wrathe you, and whyle that ye me serue
Cherysshen you, right after that ye deserue

And shortly dere herte, and al my knyght
Beth glad, and beaureth you to lusshyrtesse
And I shal trewly, with al my tul myght
your byttre turmen al to swetenesse
If I be she, that may do you gladnesse
For euery wo ye shal recouer a blysse
And him in armes take, and gan him kysse

Fyl Pandarus on knees, and vp his eyen
To heuen threw, and held his hondes bye
Immortal god (q̄ he) that mayst nat dyen
Cupide I meane, of this mayst glorye
And venus, thou mayst makken me to dye
wythouten honde, me semeth that in towne
For this myracle yche here eche bell to wone

But ho, no more nowe of this matere
For why this folke wol comen vp anone
That haue the letter redde, lo I hem here
But I conture the Crefeyde, and one
And two, thou Troylus wha yf mayst gone
That at myn house ye ben at my warnyng
For I ful wel shal shapen your comyng

And easeth there your hertes right ynough
And let se whyche of you shal beare the bel

To

To spede of loue aright, & therwith he lough
For there haue I a leyser for to tell
(Quod Troylus) howe long that I dwell
Er this den done: gy he, whe thou maist syke
This thyng shal be right as you list deuyse

With that Helayne, and also Delpheb⁹
Tho comen vpward, right at ꝑ stayres ende
And lorde so tho gan grocten Troylus
His brother and his syster for to blende
(ꝙ Pandarus) at tyme is that we wende
Take nece myn your leaue at al thne
And let hem speke, & cometh forth with me

She toke her leaue at hem ful thrystely
As she wel coulde: & they her reuerence
Vnto the ful dyddon hardely
And wonder wel speaken in her absence
Of her in prayslyng of her excellence
Her gouernaunce, her wyt, and hyr maniere
Comendeden, that it ioye was to here

Nowe let her wende vnto her owne place
And turne we to Troylus agayne
That gan ful lightly of the lettre pace
That Delpheb⁹ had in the gardyn seyne
And of Helayne and hem he wolde feyne
Delectted hem, and sayd that hem leste
To slepe, and after tales haue a reste

Helayne him kyst, and toke her leue blyue
Delpheb⁹ eke, & home wente euery wight
And Pandarus, as faste as he may dryue
To Troylus tho came, as lyne eyght
And on a pallet, al that gladde nyght
By Troylus he lay, with mery chere
To tale, & wel was hem they were yfere

Whe euery wight was boyded, but they two
And al the doores weren faste yshette
To tel in shorte, without wordes mo
This Pandarus, without any lette
Vp rose, and on his beddes syde hem sette
And gan to speaken in a sobre wyse
To Troylus, as I shal you deuyse

Myn alderleueſt lorde, and brother dere
God wot and thou, that it sate me so sore
whan I the sawe so languysshyng to here
For loue of which thy wo wore al way more
That I with al my might, and al my lore
Haue euer syther done my besynesse
To bringe the to ioye out of distresse

And haue it brought to such plyte as ꝑ woste
So ꝑ through me thou stondest now in way
To fare wel, I say it for no boste
And woste thou why, but shame it is to say
For the haue I begon a gamen play
whiche that I neuer done shal ette for other
Al tho he were a thousande folde my brother

That is to say, for the am I becomen
Betwyxen game and ernest, suche a mene
As maken women vnto men to comen
Al say I nat, thou woste well what I mene
For the haue I my nece, of yres clene
So fully made thy gentylesse tryst
That all shal ben, right as thy selfe lyste

But god, ꝑ al wotteth take I to wytnesse
That neuer I thys for coueryse wrought
But onely for to abredge that distresse
For which wel nye thou dydest, as me thought
But good brother, do nowe as the ought
For goddes loue, and kepe her out of blame
Syns thou art wyse, & saue alway her name

For wel thou woste, the name as yet of her
Amõges ꝑ people, as (who sayd) halowed is
For that man is vnbore I dare wel swere
That euer wyste that she dyd amys
But wo is me, that I that cause al thys
May thynken that she is my nece dere
And I her eme, and traytour eke yfere

And were it wyste ꝑ I through myn engyn
Had in myne nece yput this fantasye
To done thy lust, and holly to be thyn
why: al the worlde wolde vpon it crye
And say, that I the worste trechetye
Dyd in thys case, that euer was begonne
And she forlorne, & thou right naught ywonne

Wherfore er I wol ferther gone or paas
Yet ere I the beseche, and fully say
That pryuyte go with vs in thys caas
That is to sayne, that thou vs neuer wray
And be nat wroth, though I the ofte pray
To holden secre suche an hygh matere
For skylfull is (thou woste well) my prayere

And thinke, what wo ther hath betyd er this
For makyng of auauntes, as men rede

And what myschaunce in this worlde yet is
Fro day to day, right for that wycked dede
For whiche these wyse clerkes that ben dede
Haue euer thys prouerbed to vs yonge
That the fyrst vertue is to kepe the tonge

And nere it that I wyste as now at iugge
Dilfulyon of speche, I couthe almoost
A thousande olde stories the aledge
Of women lolle, through false & fooles boste
Prourdes caulse thy selfe ynowe, & woste
Iwrist that vyce for to ben a blabbe
Al sayd men sothe, as often as they gabbe

O tonge alas, so often here beforne
Haste thou made many a lady bright of hewe
Sayd, wela way the day that I was borne
And many a maydens sorowe for to newe
And for the more parte al is vntrewe
That mé of yelpe, & it were brought to preue
Of kynde, none auauntour is to leue

Auauntour and a lyer, al is one
As thus: I pose a woman graunt me
Her loue, and sayth that other woll she none
And I am swoine to holden it secre
And after I tel it two or thre
I wys I am auauntour at the leest
And lyer eke, for I breke my beheest

Now looke thã, if they be nat to blame (what
Suche maner folke, what shall I clepe hem
That hem auaunte of women, and by name
That yet behyght hem neuer this ne that
Ne knowe hem more than myne olde hat
No wonder is, so god me sende heele
Though womé dreden with vs men to deele

I say nat thys for no mistrust of you
Ne for no wyse men, but for fooles nyce
And for the harme that in þ worlde is nowe
As wel for folye ofte, as for malyce
For wel wote I, in wyse folke that vyce
No woman dredeth, yf she be well auysed
For wyse ben by fooles harme chastysed

But nowe to purpose, leue brother dere
Haue all this thyng þ I haue sayd in myndé
And kepe the close, and be now of good chere
For all thy dayes thou shalt me trewe fynde
I shall thy processe set in suche a kynde
And god toforne, that it shall the suffyse
For it shall be, right as thou wolte deuyse

For wel I wote, thou meanest well parde
Therfore I dare this fully vndertake
Thou wolde eke, what thy lady graunted the
And day is set the chartres to make
Haue now good nyght, I may vp léger wake
And byd for me, syth thou arte now in byssle
That god the sende bothe, ay soone lyssle

Who might tellen halfe the ioye or feest
Whych that the soule of Troylus tho felte
Herynge the effect of Pandarus beheest
His olde wo, that made his herte swelte
Gan tho for ioye wasten, and to melte
And all the richesse of his sygnes sore
At ones fledde, he felte of hem no more

But right so as these holtes, & these hayes
That han in wynter dedé ben and drie
Reuesten hem in grene, whan that may is
Whan euery lusty lyketh to play
Right in that selfe wyse, sothe to say
Wote sodainly his herte full of ioye
That gladder was there neuer mã in Troye

And gan his loke on Pandarus vp caste
Ful soberly, and frendly on to se
And sayd, frende, in Apul the laste
As well thou woste, yf it remembre the
Howe nygne þ dethe for wo thou founde me
And howe thou dyddest all thy besynesse
To knowe of me the cause of my distresse

Thou woste how longe I it forbare to say
To the, that arte the man that I best tryst
And peryll none was it to the to bewray
That wyst I well but tel me yf the lyste
Sythe I so loth was, that thy selfe it wyste
Howe durste I mo tellen of this matere
That quake nowe, & no wyght may vs here

But nathelesse, by that god I the swere
That as him lyst may al this world gouerne
And yf I dye, Achylles with his spere
Myne herte cleaue, al were my lyfe eterne
As I am mortal, yf I late or yerne
Wolde it bewray, or durst, or thulde conne
For al the good that god made vnder sonne

That rather dye I wolde, and determyne
As thynketh me nowe, stocked in prison
In wret-

In wretchydnesse, in fylthe, and in vermyne
Caperyse to cruell kyng Agamenon
And this in all the temples of this towne
Upon the goddes all, I woll the swere
To morowe day, yf that the lyketh here

And that thou haste so moche ydon for me
That I ne may it neuer more deserue
This know I well, all might I now for the
I thousande tymes on a morowe sterue
I can no more, but that I woll the serue
Right as thy slaue, whyther so thou wende
For euer more, vnto my lyues ende

But here with al myn herte I the beseche
That neuer in me thou deme suche folye
As I shall sayne, me thought by thy speche
That this whiche thou me doest for copanye
I shulde wene it were a baudrye
I am nat woode, all yf I lende be
It is nat so, that wot I well parde

But be that gothe for golde, or for rycheesse
On suche messages, call him what ye lyste
And this that thou doest call it gentylnesse
Compassyon, and felawshyp, and tryste
Departe it so, for wyde where is wyste
Howe that there is dyuersyte required
Betwixen thynges lyke, as I haue lered

And yf thou knowe I thynke nat ne wene
That thys seruyce a shame be or rape
I haue my layre fadres Polixene
Cassandre, Delayre, or any of the frape
Be she neuer so fayre, or well yshape
Ne me, whiche thou wylte of euerychone
To haue for thyne, and let me than alone

Both lyth yf thou hast done me this seruyce
Thy lyfe to saue, and for non hope of mede
So for the loue of god, this great empryse
Parfourme it out, nowe is the moste nede
For hyth and lowe, withouten any drede
I wol alway thyne hestes al kepe
Haue nowe good nyght, and let vs bothe slepe

Thus helde hem eche of other well apayde
That all the worlde ne might it bet amende
And on the morowed whan they were arayde
Eche to hys owne nedes gan entende
But Troylus, though as the fyre he brende
For sharpe desyre of hope, and of pleasaunce
He nat forgate his good gouernaunce

But in him selfe, vp mãhode gan restreyne
Eche rakel dede, and eche vnbridled chere
That all that lyuen sothe to sayne
Ne shulde haue wyst, by word or by manere
What that he mente, as touching this matere
From euery wyght, as ferre as is the cloude
He was so wyse, and wel dissymulen coulde

And al ỳ whyle which that I now deuyse
Thys was hys lyfe, with all his full myght
By day he was in Martes hyghe seruyce
That is to sayne, in armes as a knyght
And for the more parte the longe nyght
He lay and thought how that he might serue
His lady best, her thanke for to deserue

Nyll I nat sweare, all though he lay softe
That in his thought he nas somwhat diseased
Ne that he turned on his pillowes ofte
And wolde of that him mulled haue ben eased
But in suche case, men be nat alwaye pleased
For naught I wot, no more than was he
That can I deme of pollitykyte

But certayne is, to purpose for to go
That in this whyle, as written is in geste
He sawe his lady somtyme, and also
She with him spake, whã ỳ the durst and leste
And by her bothe auyse, as was the beste
Apoynteden ful warely in this nede
So as they durste, howe they wold proceede

But it was spoken in so shorte a wyse
In suche awayte alway, and in suche fere
Leste any wight deuynen or deuyse
Wolde of hem two, or to it lay an ere
That all this worlde so lefe to hem ne were
As that Cupyde wolde hem grace sende
To maken of her speche right an ende

But thrike lytel that they spake or wrought
Hys wyse goste toke aye, of all suche hede
It semed her he wyste what she thought
Withouten worde, so that it was no nede
To bydde hym aught to do, or aught forbede
For which she thought ỳ loue, al come it late
Of al ioye, had opened her the yate

And shortly of thys processe for to pace
So wel his werke and wordes he besette

That

That he so ful stode in his ladys grace
Twenty thousande tymes er she lette
She thanked god she euer with hym mette
So couthe he hym gouerne in suche seruyce
That al the worlde ne might it bet deuyse

For she founde him so discrete in all
So secrete, and of suche obeysaunce
That well she felte he was to her a wall
Of steele, and sheilde of euery displesaunce
That to ben in hys good gouernaunce
So wyse he was, she was nomore afered
I meane as ferre as ought ben required

And Pandarus to quicke alway the fyre
Was euer ylyke prest and dyligent
To ease his frende was set al hys desyre
He shone aye on, he to and fro was sent
He letters bare whan Troylus was absent
That neuer man, as in hys frendes nede
Ne bare hym bet than he, withouten drede

But now paraúenture som mã wayté wold
That euery worde or sonde, loke or chere
Of Troylus, that I reherce shulde
In all this whyle, vnto hys lady dere
I trowe it were a longe thyng for to here
Or of what wight ỳ Dante in suche disioynte
His wordes al, or euery loke to poynte

For sothe I haue nat herde it done er this
In storye none, ne no man here I wene
And though I wolde, I couthe nat ywys
For there was some eyrstel hem betwene
That wold, as saith myn auctour wel ycene
Nye half this boke, of which hi lyst nat write
Nowe shulde I than a lyne of it endyte

But to the great effecte, than say I thus
That stondyng in concorde and in quyete
Thys ylke two, Creseyde and Troylus
As I haue tolde, and in this tyme swete
Haue oftsy often might they nat mete
Ne leyser haue, her speches to fulfell
That it befyl, ryght as I shall you tel

That Pandarus, that euer dyd his might
Nighe for the fyne that I shall speke of here
As for to bringen to his house some wyght
His fayre neece, and Troylus yfere
Where as at leyser al thys hygh matere
Touchyng her loue, were at ỳ ful vp hounde
Had out of doute a tyme to it founde

For he with great delyberation
Had euery thyng that therto might auayle
Forne caste, and put in execution
And neyther lefte for coste ne for trauayle
Come yf hem lyste, hem shuld nothyng fayle
And for to ben in aught aspyred there
That wyste he wel an impossyble were

Dredelesse it clere was in the wynde
Of euery pye, and euery let game
Nowe all is wel, for al the worlde is blynde
In this mater, bothe fremed and tame
This tymber is al redy vp to frame
Vs lacketh naught, but that weren wolde
A certayne houre, in which she comen shulde

And Troylus, that all this purueyaunce
Knewe at the full, and wayted on it aye
And here vpon eke made great ordynaunce
And founde hys cause, ỳ therwith his aray
If that he were myssed nyght or day
Chere whyle he was about this seruyce
That he was gone to done hys sacrifyce

And muste at suche a temple alone make
Answered of Apollo for to be
And fyrst to seke the holy laurer quake
Er that Apollo spake out of the tree
To tell hym next whan grekes shulde flee
And for thy let hym no man, god forbede
But pray Apollo helpe in thys nede

Nowe is there lytell more for to done
But Pandare vp, and shortly for to sayne
Right sone vpon the chaungyng of ỳ mone
Whã lightlesse is ỳ worlde a nyght or tweyne
And that the welken shope hym for to rayne
He streyght a morowe vnto hys neece went
Ye haue well herde the fyne of hys entente

Whã he was comẽ, he gan anon to playe
As he was wonte, and of hym selfe to rape
And fynally he swore, and gan her say
By this and that, she shulde hym nat escape
No lenger done hym after her to cape
But certaynly, she muste by her leue
Come soupen in hys house wyth hym at eue

At which she lough, ỳ gan her fyrst excuse
And sayde it raynethlo, howe shulde I gone

Let be

Let be (q he) ne stonde nat thus to muse
This mote be done, ye shal come there anone
And at the laste, herof they fell at one
Or els faste he swore her in her eere
He nolde neuer comen there she were

Sone after this, she to hym gan rowne
And asked hym yf Troylus were there
He swore her nay, for he was out of towne
And sayd, neece: I pose that he were there
you durste neuer haue the more feere
For rather than men might hym there aspye
He were leuer a thousande fold to dye

Naught lyst myne auctour fully to declare
what that she thought, whan he sayd so
That Troylus was out of towne yfare
And yf he sayd therof sothe or no
But that wythouten awarte with hym to go
She granted hym, syth he her that besought
And as hys neece obeyed as her ought

But nathelesse, yet gan she hym beseche
(All though vh him to gone it was no feere)
For to beware of goostly peoples speche
That dremé thynges, which that neuer were
And well auyse hym whom he brought there
And sayd hym eme, sens I vnlyst on you tryst
Loke al be wel, and do nowe as you lyst

He swore her this, by stockes and by stones
And by the goddes that in heuen dwell
Or els were hym leauer soule and bones
wyth Pluto kyng, as depe ben in hell
As Tantalus, what should I more tell
whan al was well, he rose and toke his leue
And she to souper came whan it was eue

wyth a certayne of her owne men
And with her fayre neece Antigone
And other of her women nyne or ten
But who was glad nowe, who as trowe ye
But Troylus, that stode and myght it se
Throughout a lytel wyndowe in a stewe
There he belhet, syth midnight was in mewe

Unwyst of euery wight, but of Pandare
But to the poynt, nowe whan ỳ she was cõe
wyth all ioye, and all frendes fare
Her eme anone in armes hath her nome
And than to the supper all and some
whan tyme was, ful softe they hem sette
God wote there was no deynte feere to fette

And after supper gannen they to ryse
At ease well, with hert freshe and glade
And wel was him that coude best deuyse
To lyken her, or that her laughen made
He songe, she playde, he tolde a tale of wade
But at the laste, as euery thyng hath ende
She toke her leaue, and nedes wolde wende

But o fortune, executrice of wyerdes
O influentes of these heuens hye
Soothe is, that vnder god ye ben our hierdes
Though to vs beestes, ben the causes wyte
This mene I now, for she gã homward tyte
But execute was al besyde her leue
At the goddes wil, for which she muste bleue

The bente moone with her hornes pale
Saturnus and Ioue, in Cancro ioyned were
That sicche a rayne from heuen gan auale
That euery maner woman that was there
Had of that smoky rayne a very feere
At whiche Pandare tho lough, and sayd thenne
Nowe were it tyme a lady to gon hennе

But good neece, yf I might euer please
you any thyng, than pray I you (q he)
To don myne herte as nowe so great an ease
As for to dwell here al this nyght wyth me
For why, this is your owne house parde
For by my trouthe, I say it nat in game
To wende as nowe, it were to me a shame

Creseyde, which that could as moche good
As halfe a worlde, toke hede of hys prayere
And sens it rayned, and al was in a flode
She thought, as good chepe may I dwel here
And graunt it gladly with a frendes chere
And haue a thonke, as gruttche and than abyde
For home to gone it may nat wel betyde

I woll (q she) myne vncle lieue and dere
Sens that you lyst, it shall is to be so
I am ryght glad with you to dwellen here
I sayd but agame I wolde go
I wys graunt mercy neece (q he) tho
were it a game or no, sothe to tell
Now am I glad, sens that you lyste to dwel

Thus al is wel, but tho began aright
The newe ioye, and all the feest agayne

But

But pandarus, yf goodly had he myght
He wolde haue hyed her to bedde fayne
And fayd, lorde this is an huge rayne
Thys were a wether for to slepen in
And that I rede vs soone to begyn

And nere, wote ye where I wol you lay?
For that we shul nat lyggen ferre a sonder
And for ye neyther shullen, dare I say
Here noyse of rayne, ne of thonder
By god eyght in my closet ponder
And I wol in that vtter house alone
Ben wardayne of your women euerychone

And in this myddel chambre that ye se
Shall your women slepen, wel and sote
And there I sayd, shall your seluen be
And yf ye lyggen well to nyght, come ofte
And carefy nat what wether is a lofte
The wyne anon, and whan so you leste
Go we to slepe, I trowe it be the beste

There nys no more, but herafter sone
They boyde, dronke, & trauers drawe anon
Gan euery wyght that had naught to done
Auoyde in the place, out of the chambre gon
And euermore so sterneliche it rone
And blewe therwyth so wonderlyche loude
That wel nyghe no man heren other couide

Tho Pandarus her eme, right as him ought
With women, suche as were her moll aboute
Ful glad vnto her beddes syde her brought
And toke his leaue, and gan full lowe loute
And sayd, here at this closet doore wythout
Right ouer thwarte your women lyggen all
That whom you lyst of hem, ye may lowe cal

So whan that she was in the closet layde
And all her women fourth by ordynaunce
A bedde weren, there as I haue sayde
There nas no more to skippe nor to praunce
But boden go to bedde with mischaunce
If any wyght sterynge were any where
And let hem slepen, that a bedde were

But Pandarus, yt wel couthe eche adele
The olde daunce, and euery poynte therin
whan that he sawe that all thyng was wele
He thought he wolde vpon his werke begyn
And gan the sterre daze al softe vnpyn
As syl as stone, without lenger lette
By Troylus adown right he him sette

And shortly to the poynte right for to gon
Of al thys werke he tolde him worde & ende
And sayd, make the redy right anon
For thou shalt in to heuen blysse wende
Now blyssful Uenus, thou me grace sende
(q Troylus) for neuer yet no dede
Had I er nowe, ne halfendele the drede

(q Pandarus) ne drede the neuer adele
For it shal be right as thou wolter deuyse
Go tyssue I, this nyght shal I make it wele
Or casten al the gruel in the fyre
yet blyssful Uenus, this nyght yt me enspyre
(q Troylus) as wys as I the serue
And euer bet and bet shal tyll I sterue

And yf I had, O Uenus full of myrthe
Apeeces bedde of Mars, or of Saturne
Or thou combuste, or let were in my byrthe
Thy father pray al thyrlke harme disturne
Of grace, and that I glad ayen may turne
For loue of hym thou louedest in the shawe
I meane Adon, that with yt boze was slawe

Ioue eke for the loue of lady Europe
The which in forme of a bulle away thou fet
Now helpe, O Mars, thou vs thy blody cope
For loue of Cipria, thou me naught ne let
O Phebus, thilke whan Daphne her celat set
Under the barke, and I. auter wore for brede
yet for her loue, o helpe nowe at thys nede

Mercury, for the loue of her eke
For which Pallas was vn Iglauros wroche
Nowe helpe, and eke Dyane I the beseke
That thys vyage be nat to the lothe
O fatall fustren, wlyche of any clothe
Ne shapen was, my destyne me sponne
So helpeth to thys werke that is begon

(q Pandarus) thou wretched mouses herte
Arte thou agast so that she wol the byte
why, do on this furred cloke vpon thy herte
And folowe me, for I wol haue the wyte
But byde, and let me gon before a lyte
And wyth that he gan vndone a trappe
And Troylus he brought in by the lappe

The sterne wynde so loude gan to reute
That no wight other noyse might here

And they

And they that layen at the dore without
Ful sykerly they slepten al yfere
And Pandarus, with ful sobre chere
Gothe to the dore anon withouten lette
There as they laye, and softely it shette

And as he came ayenwarde prively
Hys nece awoke, & asketh, who goth there
Hy dere neece (quod he) eam I
Be wondreth nat, ne have of it no fere
And nece he came, and layd her in her ere
No worde for loue of god I you beseche
Let no wyght aryse, & herein of our speche

what, which way be ye comen-benedicite,
(Quod she) and how wel wyst of hem al
Nece as thys secrete trappe doth (q he)
(Quod tho Creseide) let me some wight cal
Eyth, god forbyde that it shulde so fal
(q Pandarus) that ye such folye wrought
they myght deme thyng they neuer er thought

It is nat good a slepyng hounde to wake
Ne yeue a wyght a cause for to deuyne
Your women slepyng al I vndertake
So ỹ for hem the house men myght myne
And slepen wollen tyl the sunne shyne
And whan my tale is brought to an ende
Unwyst right as I came, so wol I wende

Nowe nece myne, ye shul wel vnderstande
(q he) so as ye women demen al
That for to holde in loue a man in honde
And hym her lefe and dere herte call
And maken hym an howue aboue a call
I mene as loue an other in this mene while
She doth her selfe a shame, and hym agrie

Nowe wherby that I tel you al thys
Ye wote your selfe, as wel as any wyght
Howe that your loue al fully graunted is
To troylus, the worthyest wyght
One of the worlde, & therto trouth ryght
That but it were on hym alonge, ye nolde
Hym neuer failen, whyle ye lyuen sholde

Nowe stonte it thus, ỹ syth I fro you went
Thys Troylus, ryght platly for to seyne
Is through a gutter by a priuy went
In to my chambre come in al thys ceyne
Unwyste of euery maner wyght certeyne
Saue of my selfe, as wysely haue I ioye
And by the layth I owe Priam of Troye

And he is come in such payne and distresse
That but he be al fully woode by thys
He sodaynly mote fal in to woodnesse
But yf god helpe: and cause why is thys
He layth him tolde is of a frende of hys
Howe ỹ ye shuld loue one, that hyght Horaste
For sorow of which this nyght shal be his laste

Creseyde, which that al thys wonder herde
Out sodaynly aboute her herte colde
And with a syghe she sorowfully answerde
Alas, I wende who so tales tolde
Hy dere herte wolde me nat holde
So lyghtly false, alas conceytes wronge
What harme they done & for nowe lyue I to (lõge

Horaste alas, and falsen Troylus
I knowe hym not, god helpe me so (q she)
Alas, what wycked spyrite tolde hym thus
Nowe certes eme, to morowe and I him se
I shal therof as fully excused me
As euer dyd woman, yf him lyke
And with that worde she gan ful sore syke

O god (q she) so worldly selynesse
Which clerkes callen false felicite
ymedled is with many a bytternesse
Full anguyshous, than is god wot (q she)
Condition of veyne prosperyte
For eyther ioyes comen nat yfere
Or els no wyght hath hem alway here

O brotyl wele of mannes ioye vnstable
With what wyght so to be, or howe ỹ play
Eyther he wot, that ioye arte muable
Or wote it not, it mote bene one of tway
Nowe yf he wote it nat, howe may he say
That he hath very ioye and selynesse
That is of ignoraunce aye in derkenesse

Nowe yf he wote that ioye is transitorye
As euery ioy of worldly thyng mote flye
Than euery tyme, he that hath in memorye
The dred of leesyng, maketh him, that he
May in no parfyte sykernesse be
And yf to lese his ioye, he set a myte
Thã semeth it, that ioye is worth ful lyte

Wherfore I wolde defyne in thys matere
That treuly for aught I can espye

There is no bery wele in thys worlde here
But O thou wycked serpent ielousye
That wakkest beleued, and empoysonest folye
Why hast thou Troylus made to me untrewe
That neuer yet agylte, that I woyte

(Quod Pādarus) thus fallen is thys case
Why neece myne (quod he) who tolde hym thys
Why deth my derre herte thus alas
Ye wote, ye neece myne (quod he) what is
I hope al shal be wel, that is amys
For ye may quenche al thys, if that you leste
And doth ryght so, I holde it for the beste

So shal I do to morowe, ywys (quod she)
And god to borne, so that it shal suffyse
To morowe alwe, that were sayre (quod he)
Nay nay, it may nat stonden in this wyse
For neece myne, this wasten clothes wyse
That peryl is wyth dretchyng in drawe
Nay, soch abodes be nat worth an hawe

Neece, al thynge hath tyme I dare awowe
For whan a chambre a fyre is, or an hal
wel more nede is, it sodaynly restowe
Than to despuyten and aslken amonges al
Dowe the candel in the strawe is fal
Ah benedicite, for al amonge that fare
The harme is done, and farwell feldefare

And neece myne, ne take it nat a greue
If that ye suffre hym al nyght in thys wo
God helpe me so, ye had hym neuer leue
That dare I saine, now ther is but we two
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do
Ye bene to wyse to done so great folye
To put hys lyfe al nyght in ieopardye

Had I hym neuer lefe, by god I wene
Ye had neuer thyng so lefe (quod she)
Nowe by my thryfte (quod he) it shal be sene
For syth ye make thys ensample of me
If ich al nyght wolde hym in sorowe se
For al the treasour in the towne of Troy
I bydde god, I neuer mote haue ioye

Nowe loke than, yf ye that bene hys loue
Wolde put hys lyfe al nyght in ieopardy
For thyng of nought, now by ꝑ god above
Nat onely thys delay cometh of folye
But of malice, yf that I shulde nat lye
What platly and ye suffre hym in distresse
Ye neyther bounte done ne gentylesse

(Quod tho Creseyde) wol ye done o thyng
And ye therwyth shal fynde al his disease
Haue here and here hym this bicwe tyng
For there is nothing might him better plese
Haue I my selfe, ne more his herte apese
And kepe my derre herte, that is sorowe
Is cauteleste, that shal be seme to morowe

A tynge (quod he) ye hasellwodes shaken
Ye neece myne, ꝑ tyng must haue a stone
That myght deed men alyue maken
And such a tyng trowe I that ye haue none
Discretion out of your herd is gone
That fele I nowe (quod he) and that is routh
O time ylost, wel maist thou curlen slouth

Wote ye not wel that noble ⁊ hye courage
Ne soroweth not, ne fynneth ese for lyte
But yf a fole were in a ielous rage
I nolde letten at hys sorowe amyte
But lesse hym with a lewe wordes wyte
In other day, whā that I might him fynde
But thys thyng stant al in another kynde

Thys is so gentyl and so tender of herte
that th his herte be wol hys sorowes smerte
For trust wel, howe sore that him smert
Ye wol to you no ialous wordes sperte
And for thy neece, er that his herte sterte
Go sperte your selfe to hym of this matere
For wyth a worde ye may hys herte stere

Nowe haue I tolde what peryl he is in
And hys comyng unwyst is to ouery wight
Ne parde harme may there be none, ne syn
I wolde my selfe be wyth you al this nyght
Ye knowe eke howe it is your owne knyght
And that by ryght, ye must upon hym tryste
And I al prest to fetche hym whā you lyste

This accident so pytous was to here
And eke so lyke a sorte, at prime face
And Troylus her knyght, to her so dere
His prime cōmyng, and the syker place
That though she dyd him as than a grace
Consydred al thynges as they stode
No wonder is, sens he dyd al for goode

Creseyde answerde, as wyselye god at reste
My soule bryng, as me is for him wo

And

And eme ywys fayne wolde I done the best
If that I a grace had for to do so
But whether that ye dwell, or for hym go
I am, yet god me bettre mynde sende
At Dulcarnon, eyght at my wyttes ende

(Quod Pandarus) yea nece wol ye here
Dulcarnon is called flemyng of wretches
It semeth hard, for wretches wolle nauht lere
For bery slouth, or other wylful tetches
This is sayd by hem, þ be nat worth two fet
But ye ben wise, & þ ye han on honde ches
Nys neyther hard, ne skylful to withstonde

This eme (q she) doth here of as you lyst
But er he come, I wol vp fyrst aryse
And for the loue of god, sens al my tryst
Is on you two, and ye bethe bothe wyse
So werketh nowe, in so discret a wyse
That I honour may haue and he plesaunce
For I am here, al in your gouernaunce

That is wel sayd (q he) my nece dere
There good thryfte on that wyse getyl hert
But leggeth fyr, & taketh hym eyght here
It nedeth not no ferther for hym stert
And eth of you easeth other sorowes smert
For loue of god, and Venus I the herye
For sone hope I, that we shal ben merye

This Troylus ful sone on knees hym sette
Ful sobrely, eyght by her beddes heed
And in his best wyse hys lady grette
But lorde she wore sodaynly ebe reed
He thought men shulde smyten of her heed
She colde not a worde aright out bringe
So sodaynly for hys sodayne comyng

But Pandarus, that so wele coulde fele
In euery thyng to play anon began
And said, nece, se how this lorde can knele
Nowe for your trouth, se hys gentyl man
And with that word, he for a qurshen ran
And said, kneleth now whyle that you leste
There god your bettres bringe sone at reste

Can I naught sayn, for she bad him nat rise
It sorowe it put out of her remembraunce
Or ris that she toke it in the wyse
Of duetie, as for his obseruaunce
But wel fynde I, she did hym this plesaūce
That she hym kyst, al though she syked sore
And bade him syttе adowne withoutē more

(Quod Pandarus) nowe wol ye well begyn
Nowe doth him syttе, good nece dere
Upon your beddes syde, al ther wythin
That eche of you the bet may other here
And, wh that worde he drew him to the fyere
And toke a light, & fonde his countenaunce
As for to loke vpon an olde romaunce

Creseyde that was Troylus ladye eyght
And clere stode in a grounde of sykernesse
Al thought she her seruaunt & her knyght
Ne shulde non untrouth in her gesse
That nathlesse, conf ydred hys distresse
And that loue is in cause of such folye
Thus spake she to hym of his ialousye

Ne hert myne, as wolde the excellence
Of loue, ayenst the which that no man may
Ne ought eke goodly maken resistence
And eke bycause I felte wel and say
Your great trouth and seruyce euery day
And þ your hert al myn was forth to fayne
This drouе me for to rew vpon your payne

And your goodnes haue I soūde alway yet
Of which my dere hert, and all my knyght
I thanke it you as ferre as I haue wyt
Al can I not as moche as it were eyght
And I enforth my conning and my myght
Haue, & aye shal, howe sore that me smert
Ben to you trewe & hole wythall myne hert

And bydeleue that shal be founden at preue
But herte myne, what al this is to sayne
Shal wel be told, so þ ye nought you greue
Though I to you right on your self cōplain
For there wyth meane I finally payne
That halte your hert and mine in heynesse
Fully to slayne, and euery wronge redresse

Ny good myne, not I, for why ne howe
That ielousy alas, that wycked wyuere
Thus causeleslye is croppen in to you
The harme of which I wold fayne delinere
Alas, that he al hole or of him slyuere
Shulde haue hys refute in so digne a place
That Ioue, him sone out of your hert race

But O thou, O auctour of nature
Is this an honour to thy dignyte

That folke vngylty ſuffre here iniure
And who that gylty is, al quyte goth he
O were it leful for to playne of the
That vndeſerued ſuffreſt ialouſy
O, that I wolde vpon the playne and crye

Ne al my wo is this, that folke nowe vſen
To layne ryght thus: yee, ialouſy is loue
And wolde a buſhel of venym al excuſen
For whā that a graine of loue is on it ſhoue
But wote hygh Ioue that ſytte aboue
If it be lyker loue, hate or grame
And after that it ought beare hys name

But certayne is, ſome maner ialouſye
Is excuſable, more than ſome ywys
Is whan cauſe is, and ſome ſuch fantaſye
wyth pyte ſo wel expreſſed is
That it vnneth doth or ſayth anys
But goodly dryueth vp al hys diſtreſſe
And that excuſe I for the gentyleſſe

And ſome ſo full of furye is, and diſpyte
That it ſurmounteth hys repreſſion
But herte myne, ye be nat in that plyte
That thonke I god, for which your paſſion
I wyl not cal it but illuſion
Of habundaunce of loue, and beſy cure
That doth your herte this diſeſe endure

Of which I am ſory, but not wroth
But for my deuoure and your hertes reſt
where ſo you lyſt, by ordal or by othe
By ſorte, or in what wyſe ſo you leſte
For loue of god, let preue it for the beſt
And yf that I be gylty, do me dey
Alas what myght I more done or ſey

wyth that a fewe bryght teeres newe
Out of her eyen fel, and thus ſhe ſeyde
now god yf woſt, in thought ne dede vntrewe
To Troylus was neuer yet Creſeyde
with yf her heed downe in the bed ſhe leyde
And with the ſhete it wrygh, and ſyghed ſore
And held her peace, nat a word ſpake ſhe more

But now help god, to quenche all thys ſorow
So hope I that he ſhal, for he beſt may
For I haue ſene of a ful muſty morowe
Folowen ful ofte a mery ſommers day
And after wynter foloweth grene May
Men ſene alday, and reden eke in ſtories
That after ſharpe ſhoures bene victories

Thys Troylus, whan he her wordes herde
Haue ye no care, ham lyſte not to ſlepe
For it thought hym no ſtrokes of a yerde
To here or ſe Creſeyde hys lady wepe
But wel he felte aboute hys herte crepe
For euery teare whych that Creſeyde aſtert
The crāpe of dethe, to ſtrayne hym by yᵗ hert

And in hys mynde he gan the tyme acurſe
That he came there, and that he was borne
For nowe is wrēke turned in ſo worſe
And al that labour he hath done beforne
he wend it loſt, he thought he nas but lorne
O Pandarus thought he, alas thy wyle
Serueth of naught, ſo welaway the whyle

And there withal he bygge adown his heed
And fel on knees, and ſorowfully he ſyghte
what might he ſaine, he felt he nas but deed
For wroth was he yᵗ ſhuld his ſorowes lyte
But nathelеſſe, whan that he ſpeken myght
Thā ſaide he thus, god wot yᵗ of this game
whan al is wyſt, than am I not to blame

Therwyth the ſorowe of his hert ſherte
That from hys eyen fyl there nat a teere
And euery ſpyrit his bryght in knette
So they aſtonyed or oppreſſed were
The feling of ſorowe, or of hys feere
Or of aught els, ſtedde were out of towne
Adowne he fyl al ſodaynly in ſwoune

This was no lytle ſorowe for to ſe
But al was huſhte, and Pandarus vp as faſte
O nece peace, or we be loſt (q he)
Bethe not agaſte, but certayne at laſte
For thys or that, he in to bedde hym caſte
And ſayd, O thefe, is this a mannes herte
And he rent al to his bare ſherte

And ſayd nece, but ye helpe vs nowe
Alas your owne Troylus is lorne
I wys ſo wolde I, and I wyſte howe
Ful fayne (q ſhe) alas that I was borne
Ye nece, wol ye pullen out the thorne
That ſtycketh in his herte (q Pandare)
Say al forgeue, and ſtynt is al thys fare

Yea that to me (quod ſhe) ful leuer were
Than al the good the ſunne aboute goth

And

And there wythal she swore him in hys ere
Iwys my dere herte I am not wrothe
Have here my trouth, & many an other othe
Newe speke to me, for it am I Creseyde
But all for naught, yet might he nat abrayde

Therto his ponce, & paumes of his handes
They gan to frote, & wete his teples twayn
And to delaye hym fro bytter bandes
She ofte hym kyste, & shortly for to sayne
Him to rewaken the dyd al her payne
And at the last he gan his eyen to dresse
And of his swoune sone after that adawe

And gan her mende, and reason to hym take
But wonder sore he was abashed yfwys
And with a sygh whan he gan her awake
He said, O mercy god, what thing is this
Why do ye with your selven thus amys
(Quod tho Creseyde) is this a mans game
What Troylus, wolle ye do thus for shame

And therwhal her arme ouer hym she layde
And al for pane, and ofte tyme him kesse
He thonked her, and to her spake and sayde
As fyl to purpose, for his hertes ese
And she to that answerde hym as her lese
And with her goodly wordes hym disporte
She gan, and ofte hys sorowes to comforte

(Quod Pandarus) for aught I can espyen
This night nor I ne serven here of naught
Lyghte is not good for sycke folkes eyen
But for the loue of god, syns ye ben brought
In thus good plyte, let now non heuy thought
Ben hangyng in the herts of you twey
And bare the candel to the chymeney

Soone after this, though it no nede were
Whan she suche othes as her lyste deuyse
Had of him take, her thought tho no feere
Ne cause eke none, to byd hym thence ryse
Yet lesse thyng than othes may suffyse
In many a case, for euery wyght I gesse
That loueth wel, meaneth but gentyllesse

But in effecte she wolde wete anon
Of what man, and eke where, and why
He ialous was, syns there was cause non
And eke the signe that he toke it by
She bade him that to tel her besyly
Or elis certayne she bare hym on honde
That thys was done of malyce her to fonde

wythouten more, shortly for to sayne
He must obey vnto thys ladyes heste
And for the lasse harme he must fayne
He sayd her, whan she was at such a feest
Why might on him haue loked at the leest
Not I nat what, al dere ynough a eyghe
Who that nedes must a cause fynde

And she answerde, swete, al were it so
What harme was ỹ syns I non yuell meane
For by that god that bought vs both two
In al thynge is myne entent cleene
Such argumentes ne be not worth a beene
Wol ye the childyshe ialous counterfete
Nowe were it worthy that ye were ybete

Tho Troylus gan sorowfully to syke
lest she be wroth, hym thought hys hert deyde
And sayde, alas, vpon my sore wes syke
Have mercy swete herte myne Creseyde
And yf that in the wordes that I seyde
Be any wronge, I wol no more trespace
Doth what you lyst, I am al in your grace

And she answerde, of gylte mysericorde
That is to sayne, that I forgeue al thys
And euermore on thys nyght you recorde
And bethe wel ware ye do no more amys
Nay dere herte myne (quod he) ywys
And nowe quod she, that I haue you do smerte
Forgeue it me, myne owne swete herte

This Troylus with blisse of that supprised
Put al in goddes hande, as he that mente
Nothyng but wel, and sodaynly auysed
Her in armes faste to him hente
And Pandarus, with a ful good entente
Lande him to slepe, and sayde, yf ye be wyse
Swyueneth not now lest no folke aryse

what might or may the sely larke say
whan the sperhauke hath him in his fote
I can no more, but of these yike tway
To whom thys tale sugre be or sote
Though I tarye a yere, somtyme I mote
After myne auctour tellen her gladnesse
As wel as I haue tolde her heuynesse

Creseyde, which that felte her thus stake
(As writen clerkes in her bokes olde)

Ryght as an aspen leefe she gan to quake
whan she hym feite her in hys armes folde
But Troylus al hole of cares colde
Gan thanken tho the bisshul goddes seuen
throughe sodyn paines to hym sonke so to beuē

This Troylus in armes gan her streine
And sayd swete, as euer mote I gone
Now be ye caught, here is but we twayne
Nowe yeldeth you, for other boote is none
To that Creseyde answerde thus anone
Ne had I er nowe, my swete herte dere
Ben yolde ywys, I were nowe nat here

O, soth is sayd, that heuied for to be
As of a feuer, or other great sickneese
Men must drynken, as we oftē se
Ful bytter drynke, and for to haue gladneese
Men drynken oft payne, and great distreese
I meane it here by, as for thys auenture
that through a paine hath foūde al his cure

And nowe swetnesse semeth more swete
That bytternesse assayed was bifome
For out of wo in bisshe nowe they flete
None such they felten sens they were borne
Nowe is thys bet, than both two be lorne
For loue of god, take euery woman hede
To werken thus, yf it come to the nede

Creseyde al quite from euery drede and tene
As she that nist cause had him to tryste
Made him such feest, it ioye was to sene
whan she his trouth and clene entent wyst
And as about a tre wyth many a twyste
Bytrent and writhe the swete wodbynde
Can eche of hem in armes other wynde

And as the newe abashed nyghtyngale
that stynteth first, whā she begynneth sing
whan that she hereth any heerdes tale
Or in the hedges any wyght stirryng
And after fyker doth her voice out ring
Right so Creseyde, whan her drede stent
Opened her hert, and tolde him her entent

And right as he yͤ serth hys derth yshapen
And dyen mote, in aught that he may geite
And sodaynly recous doth him escapen
And from his deth is brought in quyernesse
For al this worlde, in such presence gladnesse
Was Troylus, and hath his lady swete
wyth worse happe god let hē neuer mete

Her armes smal, her streyght backe & soft
Her sydes long, flesshly, smoth, and whyte
he gan to stroke, & good thryfte bade full oft
Her snowysshe throte, her brestes round & lite
Thus in thys heuen he gan him to delyte
And therwithal a thousande tymes her kyst
That what to done for ioye vnneth he wyst

Than sayd he thus, O loue, O charite
Thy mother eke, Citherea the swete
That after thy selfe, next heryed be she
Venus I meane, the wel wyllyy planete
And next that, Iuneus I the grete
For neuer man was to you goddes holde
As I which ye haue brought fro cares cold

Benigne loue, thou holy bonde of thynges
who so wol grace, & lyste the nat honouren
Lo, thys desyre wol flye wythouten wynge
For noldest thou of bountie hem socouren
That seruen best, and most alway labouren
yet were al lotte, yͤ dare I well sayne certes
But yͤ thy grace passed our deseртes

And for thou me yͤ leste thōke couldе deserue
Of hem that nombred ben vnto thy grace
but holpen, thet I lykely was for to sterue
And me bestowed in so hygh a place
That thrike boundes may no bisshe pace
I can no more, but laude and reuerence
Be to thy bounte and thyne excellence

And therwithal Creseyde anone he kyst
Of which certayne she felte no disease
And thus sayd he, nowe wolde god I wyst
Myne herte swete, how I you might please
what man yͤ he was euer thus at ease
As I for on which the fayrest, and the best
That euer I sey, deyneth her to rest

Here may men sene that mercy passeth right
The experience of that is felte in me
That am vnworthy to so swete a wyght
But herte myne, of your benignite
So thynke, that though I vnworthy be
yet mote I nede amenden in some wyse
Wyght through yͤ vertue of your hye seruice

And for the loue of god my lady dere
syth he hath wrought me for I shall you serue

Is thus I meane: woll ye be my feere
To do me lyue, yf that you lyst, or steruе
So teacheth me, howe that I may deserue
your thóke, so ỳ I thrugh myne ignorauńce
Ne do nothyng that you be displeasaunce

For certes fresh womanlyche wyse
This dar I saye, that trouth and diligence
That shall ye fynden in me all my lyse
Ne I woll nat certayn breken your defence
And yf I do present or in absence
For loue of god let slee me with the dede
yf that it lyke vnto your womanhede.

Iwys (q she) myne owne hertes lust
My grounde of ease & all myne hert dere
Graunt mercy, for on that is all my trust
But let vs fal awaye fro this matere
For it suffyseth, this that sayd is here
And at o worde, withouten repentaunce
welcome my knyght, my peace, my suffy-
saunce

Of her delyte or ioyes one of the leest
were impossyble to my wyt to saye
But wdgerth ye that haue ben at the feest
Of such gladnesse, yf that hem lyst playe
I can nomore, but thus these yike tway
That nigh bestraten diede and sykernesse
Setten in loue the great worthynesse

O blyssful myght, of hem so longe ysought
how blyth vnto hem both two thou were
why ne had I such leest vth my soul yboght
yea, or the leest ioye that was there
Away thou foule daunger and thou feere
And let hem in this heuen blysse dwell
That is so hygh, that all ne can I tell.

But soth is, though I can not tellen all
As can myne auctour of his excellence
yet haue I sayd, and god to forne shall
In euery thyng all holly his sentence
And yf that I at loues reuerence
Haue any worde in eched for the best
Doth therwithal ryght as your seluen lest.

For my wordes here, and euery parte
I speke hem all vnder correction
Of you that feling haue in loues arte
And put it all in your discrettion
To entreate or make diminution
Of my langage, and that I you beseche
But now to purpose of my rather speche

These yike two that bothe in armes last
So loth to hem a sonder gon to were
That eche from other wenden neuer hyrast
Or els lo, this was her moost feere
That all this thyng but vyce dreames wer
For which ful oft eche of hem sayd, o swete
Clyppe I you thus, or els do I it mete

And lorde so he gan goodly on her se
That neuer his loke ne bleynt fro her face
And sayde, O dere hertt maye it be
That it be soth that ye ben in this place
yea hert myne, god thanke I of his grace
(q tho Creseyde) & therwithal hym kyst
That where her spyrite was, for ioye she
(wyst

This Troylus full oft her eyen two
Gan for to kysse, and sayd: O eyen clere
It weren ye that wrought me suche wo
ye humble nettes of my lady dere
Though ther be mercy writte in your chere
God wot the tertt full harde is for to fynde
Now coude ye, withouten bonde me bynde.

Therwith he gan her fast in armes take
And well an hundred tymes gan he syke
Nat such sorowfull syghes as men make
For wo, or els whan that folke be syke
But easy syghes such as ben to lyke
That shewed his affection within
Of suche syghes coulde he nat blyn.

Sone after this, they spake of sondry thin-
As fyll to purpose of this auenture (ges
And playing, enterchaungeden her rynges
Of which I can not tellen no scripture
But well I wot, a broche of golde & asure
In which a ruby set was lyke an herte
Creseyde him yaue, & stacke it on his sherte.

Lorde trowe ye that a couetous wretche
That blamesth loue, and halte of it despyte
That of tho pens ỳ he can muckre & ketche
was euer yet yeue to him suche delyte
As is in loue, in o poynt in some plyte
Nay doutelesse, for also god me saue
So parfyte ioye may no nygarde haue.

They woll say yes, but lorde so they lye
Tho busy wretches ful of wo and drede

That callen loue a woodnesse of folye
But it shall fall hem as I shall you rede
They shall wepen the whyte & eke the rede
And ryde in wo, ther god yeue hem myschaūce
and euery louer that his folowly auaūce (chaūce

As wolde god tho wrecches that dispyse
Heruyce of loue, had eares also longe
As had Midas, full of couetyse
And therto dronken had as hote & stronge
As Croelus dyd, for his alliaūces wronge
To reathen hem, that they ben in the vyce
And louers nat although they holde hem wyse

These ylke two of whom ỳ I you say
whan that her hertes wel assured were
Tho gonnen they to speake and to playe
And eke rehercen how, whan, and where
They knewe fyrst, & euery wo or fere
That passed was, but all suche heuynesse
I thonke it god, was turned to gladnesse

And eurmore, whan that hem fyll to speke
Of any thyng of suche a tyme agon
with kyssyng all that tale shulde breke
And fallen into a newe ioye anon
And dyddē al her myght, syns they wer one
For to recouren blysse, and ben at ease
And payred wo with ioye, countrepeyse.

Reason woll not that I speake of slepe
For it accordeth not to my matere
God wot they toke of it full lytle kepe
But lete this night that was to hem so dere
Ne shulde in bayne escape in no maniere
It was beset in ioye and besynesse
Of all that sowneth into gentylnesse.

But whan the cocke, cōmune astrologer
Gan on his breest to beate, and after crowe
And Lucifer, the dayes messaunger
Gan for to ryse, and out her beames throw
And estward rose to hym that that coulde it
Fortuna maior, thā anon Creseyde knowe
with hert sore to Troylus thus seyde.

Myne hertes lyke, my trust, all my plesaūce
That I was borne alas, that me is wo
That day of us mote make dyseuerāunce
For tyme it is to ryse, and hence go
Or els I am lost for euer mo
O nyght alas, why wilt thou ouer vs houe
As longe as whan Alcmena laye by Ioue,

O blacke nyght, as folke in bookes rede
That shapen art by god this world to hyde
At certayne tymes, with thy derke wede
That vnder that men myght in rest abyde
wel ought̄e bestes to playn, & folk to chyde
That ther as day vs labour wold vs bryng
That thou thus flyest, & deynest vs nat rest

Thou doest alas, to shortly thyne offyce
Tho rakle nyght, ther god maker of kynde
The for thyme haste, & thyne vnkynde vyce
So fast aye to our hemispery bynde
That neuermore vnder ỳ ground thou wynde
For now for thou so hyest out of Troye
Haue I forgone thus hastily my ioye

This Troylus that with tho wordes feire
As thought hym tho, for pitous distresse
The blody teares from his hert meint
As he that yet neuer suche heuynesse
Assayed had, out of so great gladnesse
Gan therwithall Creseyde his lady dere
In armes strayne, & holde hir lowly manere

O cruell daye, accuser of the loye
That myght & loue hane stole & fall ywryen
Accursed be thy cōming into troye
For euery bore hath one of thy bryght eyen
Enuyous day, what lyst the so to spyen
what hast thou lost, why seke thou thus
There god thy light so quēche for his grace. (place

Alas, what haue these louers the agryte
Dispytous day, shyne be thy payne of hell
For many a louer hast thou slayne, & wyll
Thy pryng in wol nowhere let hem dwell
what profyst thou thy lyght here for to sell
Go sell it hem that smal frales graue
we woll the not, vs nedeth no daye haue

And eke the fumme Tytan gan he chyde
And sayd, O foole, wel may mē the despise
That hast al night the dawning by thy syde
And suffrest her so soone vp fro the ryse
For to dyscase vs louers in this wyse
what hold your bryd, ther thou & thy morow
I byd god so yeue you both sorowe.

Therwith ful sore he syghed, & thus he seyd
My lady tyght, and of my wele or wo
The

The well & roote, o goodly myne Creseyde
And shall I ryse alas, and shall I sor-
Now sele I that my hert mote a two
And how shulde I my lyfe an houre saue
Syns that with you is all the lyfe I haue-

what shall I done-for certes I not how
Ne whan alas, I shall the tyme se
That in this plyte I may ben eft wh you
And of my lyfe god wote, how shall that be
Syns that desyre ryght nowe so byteth me
That I am deed anon, but I retourne
How shuld I long alas, fro you sojourne-

But natheles, myne owne lady bryght
were it so that I wyst verely
That your humble seruaunt, & your knight
were in your hert yet so fermely
As ye in myne, the which truly
Me leuer were than these worldes twayne
yet shulde I bet enduren all my payne

To that Creseyde answered ryght anon
And with a sygh she sayd: O hert dere
The game ywys so ferforth now is gone
That fyrst shall Phebus fallen fro the spere
And eurychc the Egle ben the doues fere
And euery rocke out of his place sterte
Er Troylus go out of Creseydes hert.

Ye ben so depe within my hert graue
That tho I wold it turne out of my thought
As wysely verey god my soule saue
To dyen in the payne, I couldc nought
And for ꝑ loue of god ꝑ vs hath wrought
Let in your brayne none other tantaly
So crepe, that it cause me to dye.

And that ye me wolde haue as fast in mind
As I haue you, that wolde I you beseche
And yf I wyst sothly that to fynde
God myght not apoynt my loyes eche
But hert myne without en more speche
Beth to me true, or ells were it routh
for I am thyne, by god & by my trouth.

Beth glad for thy, and lyue in syker nesse
Thus sayd I neuer er this, ne shall to mo
And yf to you it were a great gladnesse
To turne ayen soue after that ye go
As fayne wolde I as ye, it were so
As wysely god myne hert bryng to rest
And hym in armes toke, and oft kest

Ayenst his wyll, syth it must nedes be
This Troylus vp rose, and fast hym cledde
And in his armes toke his lady free
An hundred tymes, & on his waye him sped
And with suche wordes as his hert bledde
He sayd: farewell my dere hert swete
That god vs graut sounde & sone to mete

To which no worde for sorow she answerd
So sore gan his partyng her distrayne
And Troylus vnto his palleys ferde
As wo begon as she was, soth to sayne
So hard hym wrog of sharpe desire ꝑ payn
For to ben eft there he was in pleasaunce
That it may neuer out of his remebraunce.

Returned to his royal palleys sone
He soft vnto his bed gan for to swinke
To slepe longe, as he was wont to done
But al for nought he may wel lyg and wynke
But slepe may ther non in his hert synke
Thinking how she, for who desire him bled
All hole was worth more than he wend

And in his thought gan vp & down to winde
Her wordes al, and euery countenaunce
And fermely impressen in his mynde
The lest point that to him was pleasaunce
And verely of thylke remembraunce
Desyre al newe him brende, & lust to brede
Gan more than erst & yet toke he non hede

Creseyde also, ryght in the same wyse
Of Troylus gan in her hert shette
His worthynesse, his lust, his dedes wyse
His gentlenesse, and how she with him met
Thonkyng loue, he so well her beset
Desyring oft to haue her hert dere
In such a place as she durst make him chere

Pandare a morow which that comen was
Vnto his nece, and gan her fayre grete
And sayd: all this nyght so rayned it alas
That al my drede is, that ye nece swete
Haue lytle leyser had to slepe and mete
al this night ꝙ he, hath rayn so do me wake
That some of vs I trowe her bredes ake

And nere he came, & sayd how stant it now
This merry morowe nece how can ye fare

Creseyde

Creseyde answered: neuer the bet for you
Fore that ye ben, god yeue your hart care
God helpe me so, ye cauſed all this fare
Trow I (quod ſhe) for al your wordes whyte
O who ſo ſeeth you, knoweth you full lyte

With that ſhe gan her face for to wry
With the ſhete, and wore for ſhame al reed
And Pandarus gan vnder for to pry
And ſayd, yf that I ſhall ben deed
Haue here a ſworde, and ſmyt of my heed
With that his arme, all ſodaynly he thryſt
Vnder her necke, and at the laſt her kyſt.

I paſſe al ỳ which chargeth nought to ſaye
What, god forgaue his deth, and ſhe alſo
Forgaue: and with her vncle gan to play
For other cauſe was there none than ſo
But of this thyng ryght to the effect to go
Whā tyme was, home to her houſe ſhe went
And Pandare hath fully his entent.

Now turne we ayen to Troylus
That reſtleſſe full longe a bedde laye
And priuely ſent after Pandarus
To hym to come in all the haſte he may
He came anon, not ones ſayd nay
And Troylus full ſoberly he gret
And downe vpon the beddes ſyde hym ſet

This Troylus with all thaffectioun
Of frendly loue, that hert may deuyſe
To Pandarus on knees fyll adowne
And er that he wolde of the place aryſe
He gan hym thanken on his beſt wyſe
An hundred tyme he gan the tyme bleſſe
That he was borne to bring him to diſtreſſe

He ſayd: O frende of frendes, the alderbeſt
That euer was, the ſoth for to tell
Thou haſt in herte ybrought my ſoule at reſt
Fro Phlegeton the fyry ſtroud of hell
That though I myght a thouſād tymes ſell
Vpon a daye my lyfe in thy ſeruyſe
It myght not a mote in that ſuffyſe.

The ſun which that all the worlde may ſe
Ne wiſt I neuer yet, my lyfe that dare I leye
So holy, fayre, and goodly as is ſhe
Whoſe I am all, and ſhall tyll that I dye
And that I thus am hers dare I leye
That thanked be the hygh worthynesſe
Of loue, and eke thy kynde buſynesſe

Thus haſt thou me no lytle thyng ygyue
For why, to the obleged be for aye
My lyfe & why for through thyn help I lyue
Or elis deed had I ben ago many a day
And ỳ that worde downe in his bed he lay
And Pandarus full ſoberly hym herde
Tyll all was ſayd: & than he hym anſwerde.

My dere frende, I haue done for the
In any caſe god wot it is me leſe
And am as glad as man may of it be
God helpe me ſo, but take nowe nat agreſe
That I ſhall ſayn beware of this miſchefe
That ther as now ybrought art to thy byſe
That thou thy ſelfe ne cauſe it nat to myſſe.

For of fortunes ſharpe aduerſitie
The worſt kynde of infortune is this
A man to haue ben in proſperitie
And it remembre whan it paſſed is
Thou art wyſe ynow for thy do nat amys
Be nat to rakel though thou ſyt warme
For yf thou be, certayne it will the harme

Thou art at eſe, and holde the well therin
For alſo ſure as red is euery fyre
As great a craft is to kepe well as wynne
Bridle alway well thy ſpeche & thy deſyre
For worldly ioye holdeth nat but by a wyre
That preueth well it brekl alday ſo eft
For thy nede is to werken with it ſoft

(Quod Troylus) I hope, and god to ſome
My dere frende, that I ſhall ſo me bere
That in my gilt there ſhal nothing ben ſeen
Ne I nyll nat rakle, as for to greuen here
It nedeth nat this matter oft tere
For witteth thou myne dere wel Pandare
God wot of this thou wooldeſt lyte care

Tho gan he tell hym of his glad nyght
And whereof firſt his hert dradd, and how
And ſayd frende, as I am true knyght
And by that fayth I owe to god and you
I had it neuer halfe ſo hote as now
And aye the more that deſyre me byteth
To loue her beſt the more it me delyteth.

I nat myſelfe nat wyſely what it is
But now I fele a newe qualitie

yea

yea all an other than I dyd or this
Pandare answered and sayd thus, that he
That ones may in heuen blysse be
He frieth other wayes dare I laye
Than thilke tyme he first herde of it saye

This is a worde for all, that Troylus
was neuer full to speke of this matere
And for to prayse vnto Pandarus
The bountie of his ryght lady dere
And Pandarus to thank, and maken chere
This tale was ayen span newe to begyn
Till that the nyght departed hem atwyn

Sone after this, for that fortune it wolde
Iwomen was the blysfull tyme swete
That Troylus was warned, þ he sholde
Ther he was erst, Creseyde his lady mete
For which he felte his hert in ioye flete
And sayntfully gan al the goddes hery
And let se now, yf that he can be mery

And holden was the forme and all the gyse
Of her comyng, and of his also
As it was erst which nedeth nought deuise
But playnly to theffect ryght for to go
In ioye and suretie Pandarus hem two
Abed brought whan hem both lest
And thus they ben in quyet and in rest

Naught nedeth it to you, syth they ben met
To aske at me, yf that they blythe were
For it erst was well, tho was it bet
A thousand folde, this nedeth not enquere
Ago was euery sorowe and euery fere
And both ywys they had, and so they wend
As moche ioye as hert may comprehende.

This nys no lytle thynge of for to sey
This passeth euery wyt for to deuyse
For eche of hem gan other lustes obey
Selfe, which that these clerkes wyse
Commenden so, ne may nat here suffyse
This ioye may not wryten be with ynke
This passeth all that hert may bethynke

But cruel day, so welaway the stounde
Gan for to aproch, as they by signes knewe
For which hem thought felen dethes woũd
So wo was hem, þ chaungen gan her hewe
And day they gonnen to despyse all newe
Calling traytour, enuyous and worse
And bytterly the dayes lyght they curse.

(Quod Troylus) alas, now am I ware
That Phebus, and tho swyft stedes thre
which that drawen forth the sonnes chare
Han gon some bypath in despyte of me
And maketh it so soone daye to be
And for the same hym hasteth thus to ryse
Ne shall I neuer don hym sacrifyce

But nedes day depart hem must sone
And whan her speche don was & her chere
They twyn anon, as they wer wont to don
And setten tyme of metyng eft yfere
And many a night they wrought in this ma-
And thus fortune a tyme lad in ioye (nere.
Creseyde, & eke this kynges son of Troye.

In suffysaunce, in blysse, & in syngynges
This Troylus gan al his lyfe to lede
Despendeth, iusteth, & maketh festynges
Deuyeth freely oft, and chaungeth wede
Deholde about hym alway out of drede
A world of folke, as com hym well of kynde
The freshest and the best he couldе fynde.

That suche a boyce was of him, & a steuen
Throughout þ worlde of honour & largesse
That it vp ronge vnto the yate of heuen
And as in loue he was in suche gladnesse
That in his hert, he demed as I gesse
That there nis louer in this worlde at ease
So wel as he, and thus gan loue him plese

The goodlyhed or beautie, which þ kynde
In any other lady had ylette
Can nat þ mountenaunce of a gnat vnbynde
About his hert of all Creseydes nette
He was so narowe ymasked and yknette
That is vndon on any maner syde
That nyll nat ben for ought þ maye betyde

And by the honde full oft he wolde take
This Pandarus, and into garden lede
And suche a feaste, and such a processe make
Hym of Creseyde, and of her womanhed
And of her beautie, that withouten drede
It was an heuen his wordes for to here
And than he wolde synge in this manere

Loue that of erth, & see hath gouernaũce
Loue, that his hestes hath in heuen hye

Loue

Loue, that with an holesome alyaunce
Halt people ioyned, as hym lyst hem gye
Loue, that knytteth lawe and company
And couples doth in vertue for to dwell
Bynde this accorde, þ I haue tolde, & tell.

That þ the world w faith which þ is stable
Dyuerseth so his stoundes accordyng
That elementes that beth so discordable
Holden adonde perpetually duryng
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth brig
And þ the mone hath lordship ouer þ nyztes
Al this doth loue aye heried be his mightes

That þ the see, that gredy is to flowen
Constrayneth to a certayne ende so
His floudes, that so ferdly they ne growen
To drenchen erth and all for euermo
And yf that loue ought let his bridle go
All that now loueth asondre shulde lepe
And lost wer al, þ loue halt nowe to hepe

So wolde to god, that authour is of kynde
That with; his bonde, loue of his vertu lyst
To serchen hertes al, and fast bynde
That fro his bód no wight þ wey out wyst
And hertes colde hem, wold I þ hem twyst
To make hem loue, & that hem lyst aye rew
On hertes sore, & kepe hem that ben trewe.

In all nedes for the townes werre
He was, and aye the fyrst in armes dyght
And certaynly, but yf that bokes erre
Haue Hector, moost ydradde of any wyght
And this encrease of hardynesse and myght
Com hym of loue, his ladyes thank to wyn
That alterd his spyryte so within.

In tyme of truce on hauking wolde he ryde
Or els hunt bore, beare, or lyoun
The vnall beestes let he gon besyde
And whan þ he come rydyng into þ towne
Full oft his lady from her window downe
As fresh as faucon, comen out of mue
Full redy was hym goodly to salue

And moost of loue & vertue was his speche
And in despyte had al wrecchednesse
And doutlesse no nede was hym beseche
To honouren hem, that had worthynesse
And esen hem that weren in distresse
And glad was he yf any wight wel ferde
That louer was, whan he it wyst or herde.

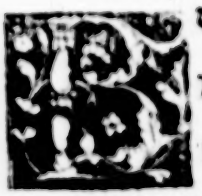
For soth to sayne, he lost held euery wyst
But yf he were in loues hygh seruyce
I meane folke that ought it ben of ryght
And ouer all this, so wel couthe he deuyse
Of sentement, and in so deuouth wyse
All his aray, that euery louer thought
That all was well, what so he sayde or wrought.

And though that he be come of bloud royal
Hym lyst of pryde, at no wyght for to chace
Benigne he was to erbe in generall
For which he gat him thánke in euery place
Thus wolde loue yherred be his grace
That pryde and yre, enuy and auarice
Ne gan to fire, and euery other vice

Thou lady bryght, the doughter of Dione
Thy bryinde & winged son the Dan Cupide
Ye fulfyll myne, the that by bellene
In hyl Pernaso lyllen fyr to abyde
That ye thus ferre han deyned me to gyde
I can nomore but syns that ye woll wende
Ye herried ben for aye withouten ende.

Though you haue I sayd fully in my song
Thestect and loue of Troylus seruyce
All be it there was some discase amonge
As myne auctour lyst to deuyse
Thy thyrde boke nowe ende I in this wyse
And Troylus in lust and in quyete
Is with Creseyde his owne hertes swete

Explicit liber tertius.



Out all to lyte, welaway the whyle
Lasteth such ioy, ythonked be fortune
That semeth trewest whan she woll begyle
And can to fooles so her songe entune
That she hem hent, þ blét traytour comune
And whá a wight is fró her whele ythrowe
Thá laugheth she, & maketh hym the mowe.

From Troylus she gan her bryght face
Away to wryth, and toke of hym none hede
And cast hym clene out of his ladyes grace
And on her whele she set vp Diomede
For which myn hert nyt now gyneth blede
And now my pen alas w which I write
Quaketh

Quaketh for drede, of that I muste endyte

For how Creseyde Troylus forsoke
Or at the leste, howe that she was vnkynde
Wote hence forthe, ben mater of my boke
As wite folke, through which it is in mynde
Alas that they shulde euer cause fynde
To speke her harme, & yf they on her lye
Iwys hem selfe shulde haue the vilanye

O ye Herynes nyghtes doughters thre
That endelesse complayne euer in payne
Megera, Alecto, and eke Tesiphonee
Thou cruell Mars eke, father of Quirynne
This yike Fourth boke helpe me to fynne
So that the loos, and loue, and lyfe ystere
Of Troylus be fully shewed here.

¶ Incipit liber Quartus.

IEgging in hoste, as I haue sayd er this
The grekes strong, aboute Troy toun
Befell, that whan that Phebus shynyng is
Upon the brest of Hercules Lyon
That Hector, with many a bolde baron
Came on a day with grekes for to fyght
As he was wont, to greue hem what he might

Not I how longe or shorte it was betwene
This purpose, & that day they fyghte mente
But on a day wel armed bright and shene
Hector and many a worthy knight out wente
With speare in hond, and bygge bowes bente
And in the berde withouten lenger lette
Her fomen in the felde anon hem mette

The longe day with speares sharpe ygrounde
With arowes, dartes, swerdes, & maces fell
They fight, & bringen horse & man to grounde
And with her axes out the braynes quell
But in the laste shoure, sothe to tell
The folke of Troye hem seluen so mysledden
That with the worse at night hom they fledden

At wyche day was taken Anthenor
Maugre Polymydas, or Monesteo
Tantyppe, Sarpedon, Palestynor
Polyte, or eke the Troyan dan Rupheo
And other lasse folke, as Phebuseo
So that for harme that day the folke of Troye
Dredden to lese a great parte of her ioye

Of Priamus was yeue, at grekes requeste
A tyme of treuce, and tho they gonnen trete
Her Prisoners to chaungen moste and leste
And for the surplus yeuen sommes grete
This thyng anon was couthe in euery strete
Both in thassege, in towne, and euery where
And with the tyrst it came to Calkas eere

Whan Calkas knew this tretyse shulde hold
In consistorie amonge the grekes sone
He gan in thyng, forthe with lordes olde
And set hym there as he was wonte to done
And with a chaunged face, hem bade anone
For loue of god, to done that reuerence
To stynten noyse, & yeue hym audyence

Than sayd he thus, lo lordes myne I was
Troyan, as it is knowen out of drede
And yf that you remembre, I am Calkas
That alderfyrst yaue comforte to your nede
And tolde wel howe that ye shulde spede
For dredelesse through you shal in a stounde
Ben Troy ybrent, & beaten down to grounde

And in what forme, or in what maner wyse
This town to shende, & al your fulle tachene
Ye haue er this wel herde me deuyse
This knowe ye my lordes, as I leue
And for the grekes weren me so leue
I came my selfe in my propre persone
To teche us this, how you was best to done

Hauyng vnto my treasour, ne my rent
Right no regarde, in respecte of your ease
Thus al my good I lefte, and to you went
Wenyng in this you lordes for to please
But all that losse ne dothe me no disease
I vouchsafe, as wisely haue I ioye
For you to lese, all that I haue in Troye

Saue of a doughter that I lefte, alasse
Slepyng at home, whan out of Troy I sterte
O sterne, o cruell father that I was
How might I haue in that so harde an herte
Alas that I ne had brought her in my shert
For sorow of which I wol nat liue to morow

Wm But

But yf ye lordes rewe vpon my sorowe

For bycause that I sawe no tyme er nowe
Her to delyuer, iche holden haue my pees
But nowe or neuer, yf that it lyke you
I may her haue right soone doutiees
O helpe and grace, amonge al this prees
Rewe on this olde caytyfe in dystresse
Sith I through you haue al this heuynesse

Ye haue nowe caught, and fettred in prison
Troyans prow, and yf your wylles be
My childe with one maye haue redemption
Nowe for the loue of god, and of bounte
One of so lele alas, so yelde hym me
what nede were it this prayer for to werne
Sith ye shul haue, both folke & town as yern

On peryll of my lyfe I shall nat lye
Apollo hath me tolde full sayrefully
I haue eke founde it by astronomy
By sorte, and by augury trewly
And dare wel saye the tyme is fast by
That fyre & flambe on all þ town shal spriede
And thus shall Troy turne to ashen dede

For certayne Phebus, & Neptunus bothe
That makeden the walles of the toun
Ben vb the folke of Troye alway so wrothe
That they wol bring it to confusyoun
Right in despyte of kyng Laomedoun
By cause he nolde payen hem her hyre
The towne of Troye shall ben set on fyre

Telling his tale alway this olde grey
Humble in his speche and lokyng eke
The salte teres from his eyen twey
Full fast romen downe by eyther cheke
So longe he gan of socoure hem beseke
That for to heale him of hys sorowes smte
They gaue him Antenor, withouten mote

But who was glad ynough, but Calcas tho
And of this thyng full sone his nedes leyde
On hem that shulden for the treyst go
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde
To bringen home dynge Thoas, & Creseyde
And when Priam his sauegarde sente
Thembassadours to Troy streight they wente

The cause I tolde of her comyng, the olde
Priam the kyng, full sone in generall
Let here vpon his parlyment holde
Of whiche the effecte reherсen you I shall
Thembassadours ben answerde for fynal
The eschaunge of prisoners, and al this nede
Hem lyketh wel, and forthe in they procede

This Troylus was present in the place
whan asked was for Antenor Creseyde
For whiche full sone chaungen gan hys face
As he þ with tho wordes well nyghe deyde
But nathelesse he no worde to it seyde
Leste men shulde his affection espye
wyth mannes herte, he gan his sorowes drye

And full of angwyshe and of grisly drede
Abode, what other lordes wolde to it sey
And yf they wolde graunt as god forbede
theschaunge of her, thā thought he thiges twey
First, how to saue her honour, & what wey
He might best theschaunge of her withstonde
Ful fayne he caste howe al this might stonde

Loue him made al prest to done her byde
And rather dyen, than she shulde go
But Reason sayde him on that other syde
withouten assent of her, do nat so
Leste for thy werke she wolde be thy foe
And sayn, þ thorugh thy medling is yblowe
Your bother loue, there it was erst vnknowe

For whyche he gan deliberen for the best
And though the lordes wolde that she went
He wolde lete hem graunt what hem lest
And tel his lady fyrst what that they ment
And whan that she had sayd him her entent
Thereafter wolde he worken also blyue
Tho al the worlde ayen it wolde stryue

Hector whiche that well the grekes herde
For Antenor, how they wold haue Creseyde
Gan it withstonde, and soberly answerde
Syrs, she ays no prisoner (he seyde)
I not on you who that this charge leyde
But on my parte, ye may eftsones hem tel
we vsen here, no women for to sel

The noyse of people vp sterte than attones
As bysyinne as blase of strawe yset on fyre
For in fortune it wolde for the nones
They shulden her confusyon desyre
Hector (q they) what gost may you enspyre
This woman thus to shild, and done vs lese

Dan Jn,

Dan Antenor, a wronge waye now ye chese

That is so wyse, and eke so bolde baroun
And we haue nede to folke, as men may se
Be is one the grettest of thys towne
O Dertot, lette thy fantasies be
O kyng Priam, q they thus segge we
That all our bote is to forgone Creseyde
And to delyuer Antenore they preyde

O Iuuenall lorde, trewe is thy sentence
That lytell wenen folke what is to yerne
That they ne fynden in her desyre offence
For cloude of errour lete hem discerne
what best is, and lo, here ensample as yerne
These folke desyren nowe delyueraunce
Of Antenore that brought hem to mischaunce

For he was after traytour to the troun
Of Troye alas they quytte him out to rathe
O wyce worlde, lo thy discrecion
Creseyde, whiche that neuer dyd hem scathe
Shall nowe no lenger in her blysse bathe
But Antenor, he that come home to towne
And he shall out, thus said they here and howne

For whiche delybered was by parlyment
For Antenor to yelden out Creseyde
And it pronounced by the prelydent
Thought that they or nay full ofte prayde
And finally, what wight that it withsayde
It was for naught it muste ben, and sholde
For fulfaunce of the parlyment it wolde

Departed out of parlyment echone
This Troylus, wythout wordes mo
Unto his chambre spedde hym faste alone
But yf it were a man of hys or two
The which he bade out fade for to go
Because he wolde slepen, as he sayde
And hastely vpon his bedde hym layde

And as in wynter leaues ben bryafte
Eche after other tyll trees be bare
So that there nys but barke and braūche vlafte
Lythe Troylus, bryafte of echo welfare
Ybounden in the blacke barke of care
Dispoled woode out of his wytte to breyde
So sore hym fate the chaungyng of Creseyde

He cryst him vp, and euery doore he shette
And wyndowe eke, and tho this sorowfull man
Upon his beddes syde downe him sette
Full lyke a dede ymage, pale and wan
And in his breste the heaped wo began
Out burste, and he to wroken in this wyse
In his woodnesse, as I shall you deuyse

Right as the wylde bulle begynneth spring
Nowe here nowe there, ydarted to the herte
And of his dethe roreth, in complayninng
Right so gan he about the chambre sterte
Smyting his brest, ay with his fystes smerte
His heed to the wal, his body to the grounde
Full ofte he swapte him seluen to confounde

His eyen two for pyte of hys herte
Out stremeden as sowrce as welles ryen
The highe sobbes of his sorowes smerte
His speche him refte, bruttes myght he sey
O dethe alas, why nylte thou do me deye
Accursed be that daye whyche that nature
Shope me to ben a lyuyes creature

But after whan the fury and all the rage
Whyche that his herte dayntie, and fast threst
By length of tyme somwhat gan aswage
Upon his bedde he layde him downe to rest
But tho begon his teares more out to brest
That wonder is the body may suffyse
To halfe this wo, which that I you deuyse

Than sayd he thus: Fortune alas the whyle
What haue I done, what haue I the agylte
Dowe myght thou for routhe me begyle
Is there no grace, and shal I thus be spylte
Shal thus Creseyde awaye for I thou wylte
Alas how mayst thou in thyn herte fynde
To ben to me thus cruell and vnkynde

Dayst I the nat honoured all my lyue
As thou wel wotest, aboue the goddes all
Why wylte thou me fro ioye thus depriue
O Troylus, what may men nowe the call
But wretche of wretches, out of honour fall
In to mysery, in which I wol bewayle
Creseyde alas, tyll that the breth me fayle

Alas Fortune, yf that my lyfe in ioye
Displeased had vnto thy foule enuye
Why ne haddest thou my father kyng of Troy
Beraft the lyfe, or done my brethern dye
Or slayne my selfe, the thus complayne and crye
I cowde worlde, that may of nothyng serue

But euer dye, and neuer fully sterue

If that Creseyde alone were me lafte
Nought raught I whyder thou woldeft me
And her alas, thā haft thou me byraft (ftere
But euermoze, lo this is thy manere
To reue a wight, that moste is to him dere
To preue in that thy gierful vyolence
Thus am I loste, there helpeth no defence

O very lozde, O loue, o god alas
That knoweft beft myn hert, and al my thouzt
what fhal my fozrouful lyfe done in this caas
If I forgo that I fo dere haue bought
Sens ye Creseyde and me haue fully brought
In to your grace, and both our hertes fealed
Howe may ye fuffre alas it be repealed

what I may done I fhal, whyle I may dure
On lyue, in turment and in cruel payne
This infoztune, oz this diſauenture
Alone as I was borne I woll complayne
Ne neuer wol I fene it fhyne oz rayne
But ende I wol as Edippe in derkneſſe
My forrouful lyfe, and dyen in diſtreſſe

O wery goſſe, that erreſt to and fro
why nyl thou flyen out of the wofulleſt
Body that euer might on grounde go
O foule, lurkyng in thys wofal neſſe
Flye forthout myn hertē, and it breſſe
And folowe alway Creseyde thy lady dere
Thy right place is nowe no lenger here

O wofull eyen two, fens your diſpozte
was al to fene Creseydes eyen bright
what fhal ye done, but foz my diſcomfozte
Stonde foz naught, and wepen out your fyght
Sens fhe is queynt, þ wōt was you to light
In veyne from this forth haue I eyen twey
I fozmed, fens your vertue is awey

O my Creseyde, O lady fouerayne
Of this wofull foule that thus cryeth
who fhal nowe yeuen comfozte to thy payne
Alas no wight, but whan myne hertē dyeth
My fpyzite, whiche that fo vnto you hyeth
Receyue in gree, foz that fhall aye you ſerue
Foz thy no fozce is, though the body ſterue

O ye louers, that hygh vpon the whele
Ben fette of Foztune, in good auenture
God lene that ye fynden aye loue of ſtele
And longe mote your lyfe in ioye endure
But whan ye comen by my ſepulture
Remembzeth that your felowe reſteth there
Foz I loued eke, though I vnwoꝛthy were

O olde vnholſome and muſtyed man
Calkas I meane, alas what eyled the
To ben a greke, ſens thou art borne Troyan
O Calcas, whiche that wolte my bane be
In curſed tyme waſte thou borne foz me
As wolde blyſful Joue foz his ioye
That I the had where I wolde in Troye

A thouſande ſyghes hotter than the glede
Out of his breſt, eche after other went
Medled with playnte newe, his wo to fede
Foz whiche his wofal teeres neuer ſtente
And ſhortly ſo hys ſozowes hym to rente
And wore ſo mate, that ioye oz penaunce
Nye feleth none, but lyeth in a traunce

Pandare, whiche that in the parlyment
Had herde what euery lozde and burgeys ſeyde
And howe full graunted was by one aſſent
Foz Antenor to yelden out Creyſeyde
Gan wel nigh wode out of his wyt to breyde
So that foz wo he nyſte what he meute
But in a rage to Troylus he wente

A certayne knight, that foz the tyme kepte
The chambze doore, vndyd it hym anon
And Pandare that full tenderly wepte
In to the derke chambze as ſtyll as ſtone
Towarde the bedde gan ſoftely to gone
So confuſe, that he nyſte what to ſay
Foz very wo, his wytte was nyghe away

And with chere and lokyng al to toune
Foz ſozowe of this, and with his armes folden
He ſtode this woful Troylus beforne
And on hys pytous face he gan beholden
But ſo ofte gan his hertē colden
Seyng his frende in wo, whoſe heuynelle
His hertē flough, as thought him foz diſtreſſe

This woful wight, this Troylus that ſeite
His frende Pandare ycomen him to ſe
Gan as the ſnowe ayenſt the ſonne meite
Foz whiche this woful Pandare, of pyte
Gan foz to wepe, as tenderly as he
And ſpecheleſſe thus ben theſe ylke twey

That ney-

That neyther might for sorowe e worde sey

But at the laste, this wofull Troylus
Nygh deed for smert, gan bresten out to roze
And with a forouful noyse he sayd thus
Amonges his sobbes and his syghes sore
Lo Pandare I am deed, withouten more
Haste thou nat herde at parlyment he seyde
For Antenor howe loste is my Creseyde

This Pandare ful deed and pale of hewe
Ful pitously answerde, and sayd yes
Is wysely were it false as it is trewe
That I haue herde, and wote al howe it is
O mercy god, who wolde haue trowed thys
Who wold haue wende, ꝑ in so lytell a throwe
Fortune our ioye wolde haue ouerthrowe

For in this worlde there is no creature
As to my dome that euer sawe ruyne
Straunger than this, through caste or auenture
But who may al eschue or al deuyne
Suche is this worlde for thy I thus defyne
Ne truste no wight to fynde in Fortune
Aye prosperite, her yeres ben commune

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorowe thus, why wyst thou in this wyse
Seme thy desyre al holly haste thou had
So that by right it ought ynough suffyse
But ꝑ that neuer felte in my seruyce
I frendly chere or lokyng of an eye
Let me thus wepe and waylen tyl I dye

And ouer al this, as thou wel wost thy selue
This towne is full of ladyes al aboute
And to my dome, fayrer than suche twelue
As euer she was, shall I fynde in some route
Yea one or twey, withouten any doute
For thy be glad myn owne dere brother
If she be loste, we shall recouer an other

What god forbyd al way ꝑ eche plesaunce
In o thyng were, and in non other wighte
If one can synge, another can well daunce
If this be goodly, she is glad and light
And this is fayre, and that can good aright
Ethe for his vertue holden is for dere
Bothe heroner and faucon for ryuere

And eke as writ Zanzis, that was ful wyse
The newe loue out chaseth ofte the olde
And vpon newe case lythe newe auyse
Thynke eke thy selfe to sauen art thou holde
Suche fyre by processe, shall of kynde colde
For sens it is but casuell plesaunce
Some case shall put it out of remembraunce

For also sure as day cometh after nyght
The newe loue, labour, or other wo
Or els selde seynge of a wight
Done olde affections al ouer go
And for thy parte, thou shalte haue one of tho
To abredge with thy bytter paynes smerte
Absence of her, shal driue her out of herte

These wordes sayd he for the nones all
To helpe his frende, leste he for sorow deyde
For doutlesse to don his wo to fall
He raught not what vnthryft that he seyde
But Troylus that nygh for sorowe deyde
Toke lytel hede, of al that euer he mente
One eere it herde, at the other out it went

But at the laste he answerde, and said frende
This lecherafte, or healed thus to be
were wel sytting, yf that I were a fende
To trayen a wight, that trewe is vnto me
I pray god let this counsayle neuer ythe
But do me rather sterue anon right here
Er I thus done, as thou me wouldest lere

She that I serue ywis, what so thou seye
To whom myn herte enhabyt is by right
Shall haue me holly hers tyll that I deye
For Pandarus sens I haue trouth her hight
I wol nat ben vntrewe for no wight
But as her man I woll aye lyue and sterue
And neuer none other creature serue

And ther thou sayest ꝑ shalt as fayre fynde
As she, let be, make no comparyson
To creature yformed here by kynde
O leue Pandare, in conclusyon
I wol nat ben of thyne opinyon
Touchyng al thys, for whiche I the beseche
So hold thy pese, thou sleest me w thy spech

Thou bydest me I shulde loue another
All freshly newe, and let Creseyde go
It lythe nat in my power leue brother
And though I might, yet wol I nat do so
But canste thou playen raket to and fro
Nette in docke out, now this now ꝑ Pãdare

Nowe foule fall her for thy wo that care

Thou farest eke by me Pandarus
As he, that whan a wight is wo bygon
He cometh to him a pace, and saith right thus
Thynke nat on smerte, and thou shalt fele none
Thou mayste me fyrst transmewe in a stone
And reue me my passyons all
Or thou so lightly do my wo to fall

The dethe may wel out of my brest departe
The lyfe so longe may this sorowe myne
But fro my soule shall Creseydes darte
Out neuermore, but down with Proserpyne
whan I am deed, I wol wonne in pyne
And there I woll eternally complayne
Thy wo, and how that twynned be we twayne

Thou hast here made an argumēt forsyne
Howe that it shulde lasse payne be
Creseyde to forgon, for she was myne
And lyued in ease and in felycite
why gabbest thou, that saydest vnto me
That him is worse that is fro wele ythrowe
Than he had erst none of that wele knowe

But tel me now, sens ꝑ the thinketh so light
To chaungen so in loue aye to and fro
why hast thou nat done besily thy might
To chaungen her, that dothe the al thy wo
why nylte thou let her fro thyne herte go
why nylte thou loue another lady swete
That may thyne herte setten in quyete

If thou hast had in loue aye yet mischaūce
And canste it nat out of thyne herte dryue
I that lyued in lust and in plesaunce
with her, as moche as creature on lyue
Howe shulde I that foryet, and that so blyue
O where hast thou ben hyd so long in mewe
That canste so wel and formelyche argewe

Nay godwote, naught worth is al thy rede
For whiche, for what that euer may befall
withouten wordes mo I wol ben deed
O dethe, that ender arte of sorowes all
Come nowe, sens I so ofte after the call
For sely is that dethe, sothe for to sayne
That ofte ycleped, cometh and endeth payne

wel wote I, whyle my lyfe was in quiete
Er thou me slewe, I wolde haue yeuen hyre
But nowe thy commyng is to me so swete
That in this worlde, I nothyng so desyre
O dethe, sens with thys sorowe I am a fyre
Thou eyther do me anon in teeres drenche
Or with thy colde stroke myne herte quenche

Sens that thou fleest so fele in sondrie wyse
Ayenst her wyl, vnprayed day and nyght
Do me at my requeste thys seruyce
Delyuer nowe the world, so doste thou right
Of me that am the wofullest wight
That euer was, for tyme is that I sterue
Sens in this world of right nawht do I serue

This Troylus in teeres gan distyll
As lycoure out of alambyke ful faste
And Pandarus gan holde his tonge styll
And to the grounde hys eyen downe he caste
But natheles, thus thought he at laste
what parde, rather than my felawe dey
Yet shal I somwhat more vnto him sey

And said frende, sens thou hast such distresse
And sens the lyst myne argumentes blame
why nylt thy seluen helpe don redresse
And with thy manhode letten all thys game
Go rauish her, ne canst thou nat for shame
And eyther let her out of towne fare
Or holde her styll, and leaue thy nyce fare

Arte thou in Troye, and hast non hardyment
To take a wight, whiche that louerth the
And wolde her seluen ben of thyne assent
Nowe is nat thys a nyce vanyte
Ryse vp anon, and let this wepyng be
And sythe thou arte a man, for in this houre
I woll ben deed, or she shall ben our

To this answerde hym Troylus ful softe
And sayd, twys my leue brother dere
Al this haue I my selfe yet thought full ofte
And more thyng than thou deuysest here
But why this thing is lasse, ꝑ shalt wel here
And whan thou hast me yeuen audyence
Thereafter mayst thou tell all thy sentence

Firste syn ꝑ wost this town hath al this werre
For rauyshyng of women so by might
It shulde nat ben suffred me to erre
As it stonte nowe, ne done so great vnright
I shulde haue also blame of euery wight
Syn y fathers graunt yf that I so withstode

Sens

Sens she is chaunged for the townes gode

I haue eke thought, so it were her assent
To aske her at my father of hys grace
Then thynke I, thys were her accusement
Sens well I wote I may her not purchace
For sens my father in so hygh a place
As parlyment, hath her eschaunge ensealed
He will for me hys lettre be repealed

yet drede I moste her herte to perturbe
wyth violence, yf I do suche a game
For yf I wolde it openly dysturbe
It muste be dysclaundre to her name
And me were leuer dye then her defame
As nolde god, but I shulde haue
Her honour, leuer then my lyfe to saue

Thus am I loste, for aught that I can se
For certayne is that I am her knyght
I muste her honour leuer haue then me
In euery case, as louer ought of ryght
Thus am I with desyre and reason ewyght
Desyre for to destourben her me dredeth
And reason wyll not, so myne herte driedeth

Thus wepynge, that he could neuer ceasse
He sayd alas, how shall I wretch fare
For well fele I alwaye my loue encreasse
And hope is lasse and lasse Pandare
Encreasen eke the causes of my care
So welawaye, why wyll myne herte breste
For as in loue there is but lytell reste

Pandare answerd, frende thou mayst for me
Done as the lyst, but had I it so hote
And thyne estate, she shulde go wyth me
Tho al this towne cryed on thys thynge by
I nolde set at al that noyse a grote (note
For whē mē haue cryed thē woll they ronne
Eke wōder last but .xv. dayes neuer in tonne

Deurne not in reasōn are so depe
Ne curtesly, but helpe thy selfe anone
Bet is that other then thy seluen wepe
And namely sens ye two ben all one
Lyfe vp, for by myne heed she shall not gone
And rather be in blame a lytell yfounde
Thē sterue here as a gnat withoutē woūde

It is no shame vnto you ne no vre
Her to wyth holden, that ye loueth moste
Paraduenture she myght holde the for nyce
So letten her go thus vnto the grekes hoste
Thinke eke fortune, as wel thy seluen woste
Helpeth hardy man vnto hys empryse
And weyueth wretches, for her cowardyse

And though thy lady wolde alyte her greue
Thou shalt thy selfe thy peace herafter make
But as to me certayne I can not leue
That she wolde it as nowe for yuell take
why shulde then for feare thyne herte quake
Thynke howe Paris hath, ꝑ is thy brother
I loue, & why shalt thou not haue another

And Troylus, o thynge I dare the swere
That yf Creseyde, whych that is thy lefe
Nowe loueth the, as well as thou doste here
God helpe me so, she nyll not take a grefe
Though ꝑ do boote anone in this myschefe
And yf she wyuneth fro the for to passe
Then is she false, so loue her well the lasse

For thy take herte, & thynke ryght as a knight
Through loue is broken aldaye euery lawe
Wyth now somwhat thy corage & thy myght
Haue mercy on thy selfe for any awe
Let not this wretched wo thyne herte gnawe
But manly set the worlde on fyre & seuen
And yf thou dye a martyr go to heuen

I wol my selfe ben wyth the at thys dede
Though I and all my kyn vpon a stounde
Shulde in a strete, as dogges lyggen deede
Through gyue wyth many a bloody woude
In euery case I woll a frende be founde
And yf the lysteth here sterue as a wretche
Adieu, the deuell spede hym that retche

Thys Troylus gan wh tho wordes quicken
And sayd frende, graunt mercy, I assent
But certayuly thou mayst not so me pryeken
Ne payne none ne may me so turment
That for no case, it is not myne entent
At thout wordes, though I dyen shulde
To rauyshen her, but yf her selfe it wolde

why, so meane I (q Pādarus) al this day
But tel me then, hast thou her well assayde
That sodowest thus & he answerde hym nay
wherof arte thou (q Pādare) thē dysmayde
That nost not that she woll ben euel apayde
To rauyshē her, sens thou hast not ben there

But yf that Ioue tolde it in thyne eere

For thy ryse vp as nought ne were anone
And walshe thy face, & to ỳ kynge thou wede
Or he may wondren whyther thou art gone
Thou must wt wysedome, hym & other bidde
Or vpon case he may after the sende
Or thou beware, and shortly brother dere
Be glad, & let me werke in thys matere

For I shall shape it so, that sekerly
Thou shalt this night sótime in some maner
Come speken wyth thy lady priuely
And by her wordes eke, as by her chere
Thou shalt full sone aperceyue & wel here
Of her entent, and in thys case the beste
And late nowe wel, for in this poynt I reste

The swyfte fame, whych ỳ falsē thinges
Equall reporteth lyke the thynges trewe
was throughout Troy tilled, wt prestwinges
fro man to man, and made hys tale al newe
How Calcas doughter with her bought hew
At parlyment wythoute wordes more
Igraunted was, in chaunge of Antenore

The whych tale anone right as Creseyde
Had herde, the whych ỳ of her father rought
(As in this case right nauȝt ne wyste be deyd
Ful busely to Iupiter besought
Yeue hem myschaunce, ỳ thys tretys brought
But shortly leste these tales soth were
She durste at no wyght asken it for fere

As she that had her herte & al her myndē
On Troylus yet so wonder faste
That al this world ne myȝt her loue vnbyndē
Fro Troylus out of her herte caste
She wold be hys, whyle ỳ her lyfe may laste
And she thus brenneth both in loue & drede
So that she nyst what was best to rede

But as men sene in towne, and all aboute
That women vsen her frendes to visyte
So to Creseyde of women came a route
For pitous ioye, and wenden her delyte
And wyth her tales dere ynough a myte
These women, whych that in the cyte dwell
They set hem downe, & sayd as I shall tell

(Quod fyrst that one) I am glad trewly
Bycause of you, that shall your lastinge se

Another sayd, ywys so am not I
For all to lytle hath she wyth vs be
(Quod tho the thyrd) I hope ywys that she
Shall bringen vs the peace on euery syde
That whé she goeth, almyghty god her gyde

Tho wordes & tho womannysshe thynges
She herd hé right as though she there were
For god it wote, her hert on other thynge is
Although the body sat amonge hem there
Her aduertence is alwaye eis where
For Troylus full faste her soule sought
wythoute worde, on hym al way she thought

These women that thus wendé her to plese
Aboute naught gonne all her tales spende
Suche vanite ne can done her none ese
As she that all thys meane whyle byende
Of other passyon then they wende
So that she felte almoste her herte dye
So wo, and wery of that companye

For whych myght she no lenger restrayne
Her teres, they gan so vp to well,
That gaue sygnes of her bytter payne
In whych her sprite was, and must dwell
Remedyinge her fro henen vnto whych hell
She fallen was, sens she forgo the syght
Of Troylus, and forowfully she syght

And thylke fooles, sittynge her aboute
wende that she wepte and syghed sore
Bycause that she shulde out of the route
Departen, and neuer playe wyth hem more
And they that had knowen her of yore
Se her so wepe, & thought it was kyndnesse
And eche of hem wepte eke for her distresse

And besely they gonnen her to comforten
One thig god wot, on which she lytel thought
And wyth her tales wenden her disporten
And to be glad they oft her besought
But such an ease ther with they her wrought
Right as a man is eased for to fele
For ache of herd, to clawen hym on hys hele

But after all thys mery vanyte
They toke her leue, and home they wentē all
Creseyde full of sorowfull pyte
Into her chambre vp wente out of the hall
And on her bedde she gan for deed to fall

In

In purpose neuer thence for to ryse
And thus she wrought, as I shal you deuyse

Her owonded heer, ꝑ sonnyshe was of hewe
Her rent, & eke her fyngers longe and smale
She wronge ful ofte, & bad god on her rewe
And wyth the death to do bote on her bale
Her hewe whylom bright, that tho was pale
Bare wytnesse of her wo, & her constraynte
And thus she spake, sobbyng in her cõplaynt

Alas (quod she) out of thys regioun
I wofull wrecch and infortuned wyght
And borne in cursed constellacioun
Hope gone, & thus departen fro my knyght
Wo worth alas, that ylke dayes lyght
On which I sawe hym fyrst wt eyen twayne
That causeth me, and I hym all thys payne

Therwyth the teres from her eyen two
Downe fell as shoure in Aprill swythe
Her whyte brest she bette and for the wo
After the death she cryed a thousande syth
Sens he that wonte her wo was for to lyth
She mote forgone, for whych dyslauenture
She helde her selfe a forlost creature

She sayd, howe shall he done and I also
Howe should I lyue, yf ꝑ I from him twayne
O dere herte eke that I loue so
Who shall ꝑ sorowe stenc that ye ben inne
O Calkas father, thyne be all thys synne
O mother myne, that cleaped were Argyue
Wo worth ꝑ daye, that thou me bare on lyue

To what fyne should I lyue & sorowen thus
Howe should a fysshe wythouten water dure
What is Creseyde worth from Troylus
Howe shulde a plante or lyues creature
Lyue wythouten hys kynde nourture
For whych full ofte, a by worde here I sey
That ecteleste more grene sone dey

I shal don thus, sens neither sword ne darte
Dare I none handle, for the cruelte
That ylke daye that I fro you departe
Yf sorowe of that nyl not my bane be
Then shall no meate ne drynke come in me
Tyll I my soule out of my brest unshethe
And thus my seluen woll I done to dethe

And Troylus, my clothes euerychone
Shul blacke ben, in tokenynge herte swete
That I am as out of thys worlde agone
That wonte was you to set in quyete
And of myne ordre aye, tyll death me mete
The obseruaunce euer in your absence
Shal sorowe ben, complaynt, & abstynence

Myne herte, & eke the wofull gost therin
Byqueth I wyth your spirite to complayne
Eternally, for they shall neuer twyn
For though in erth twynned be we twayne
Yet in the felde of Pyte, out of payne
That hyght Elysos, shall we ben yfere
As Orpheus and Erudice hys fere

Thus herte myne, for Antenor alas
I sone shalbe chaunged, as I wene
But howe shull ye done in thys sorowful cas
Howe shall your tender herte thys sustene
But herte myne, for yet thys sorowe and tene
And me also, for sothly for to sey
So ye welfare, I recche not to dey

Howe myght it euer redde ben or songe
The playnt that she made in her dystresse
I not, but as for me my lyttell tonge
Yf I dyscryuen wolde her heuynesse
It shulde make her sorowe seme lesse
Then that it was, and chyldyshly deface
Her hye complaynt, and therfore I it pace

Pandare, whych that sent from Troylus
Was vnto Creseyde, as ye haue herde deuyse
That for the best it was acorded thus
And he full glad to bene hym that seruyse
Unto Creseyde in a full secrete wyse
There as she lay, in turment and in rage
Came her to tell al holy hys message

And fonde that she her seluen gan to tete
Full petously, for wyth her salte teres
Her brest and face ybathed was full wete
Her myghty tresses of her sonnysh heres
Unbroyden, hangen all aboute her eres
Whych yaue hym very sygne of matere
Of death, whych that her herte gan dysyre

when she hym sawe, she gan for sorowe anon
Her tery face, atwyrte her armes hyde
For whych thys Pandare is so wo bygon
That in the house he myght vnneth abyde
As he that felte sorowe on euery syde

For

For yf Creseyde had erst complayned sore
Tho gan she playne a thousand tymes more

And in her aspre playnte, thus she seyde
Pandare, fyrst of loyes mo then two
was causynge vnto me Creseyde
That nowe transmued ben in cruell wo
whether shall I saye to you welcome or noo
That alderfyrst me brought vnto seruyse
Of loue alas, that endeth in suche wyse

Endeth then loue in woo ye or men lyeth
And all worldly blysse, as thynketh me
The ende of blysse aye sorowe it occupyeth
And who troweth not that it so be
Let hym vpon me wofull wretch se
That my selfe hate, and aye my byrth curse
Felynge alwaye, fro wyche I go to worse

who so me seeth, he seeth sorowe al atonis
Payne, turment, playnte, wo, and dystresse
Out of my wofull body harme there none is
As langour, anguyshe, cruell bytternesse
Annoye, sinerte, drede, furye, & eke sykenesse
I trowe ywys from heuen teeres rayne
For pyte of my aspre and cruell payne

And thou my syster, full of dyscomforte
(Quod Pandarus) what thinkest thou to doo
why ne hast thou to thy seluen some resporte
why wylt thou thus alas thy selfe forloo
Leaue al thys werke, and take nowe hede to
That I shall sayne, & herken of good entent
This message, þ by me Troylus you sente

Turned her tho Creseyde, a wo makynge
So great, that it a death was for to se
Alas (q she) what wordes maye ye bringe
what woll my dere herte sayne to me
whych that I drede neuer moze to se
woll he haue playnte or teeres er I wende
I haue ynough, yf he therafter sende

She was ryght such to sene in her vysage
As is that wyght that men on bere bynde
Her face lyke of paradys the ymage
was all ychaunged in another kynde
The play þ laughter, me were wont to fynd
On her, and eke her loyes euerychone
Ben fledde, and thus lyeth Creseyde alone

Aboute her eyen two, a purpre ryngе
Bytrent, in sothfast tokenynge of her payne
That to beholde it was a deedly thynge
For whych Pandare myght not restrayne
The teeres from hys eyen for to rayne
But natheleelle as he best myght he seyde
From Troylus these wordes to Creseyde

Lo nece, I trowe ye han herde al howe
The kynge wyth other lordes for the beste
Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and you
That cause is of thys sorowe & thys vnrest
But howe thys case doth Troylus moleste
Thys may none earthly mannes tonge say
For dery wo, hys wytte is all away

For whych we haue so sorowed, he and I
That into lytell, it had vs both slawe
But through my counsayle thys dare I nwaly
Be somwhat is fro wepynge withdrawe
And semeth me that he desyreth fawe
wyth you to ben all nyght for to deuyse
Remedye of thys, yf there were any wyse

This shorte & playne, the effect of my message
As forforth as my wytte can comprehende
For ye that ben of turment in suche rage
Nay to no longe prologe as nowe entende
And herupon ye maye answere hym sende
And for the loue of god my nece dere
So leaue thys wo or Troylus be here

Great is my wo (q she) and syghed sore
As she that feleth deedly sharpe dystresse
But yet to me hys sorowe is moleil more
That loue hym bet then he hym selfe I gesse
Alas, for me hath he such heuynesse
Can he for me so pytously complayne
I wys thys sorowe doubleth al my payne

Grenous to me god wot is for to twynne
(Quod she) but yet it harder is to me
To sene that sorowe, whych that he is inne
For well wote I, it wol my bane be
And dye I wol in certayne tho (quod she)
But byd hi come, er deth þ thus me threteth
Out of my gost, whych in myne hert beteth

These wordes sayd she, on her armes two
Fyll grufle, and gan to wepen pytously
(Quod Pandarus) alas why do ye so
Sens ye well wote the tyme is fast by
That he shall come, aryse vp hastely

That

That he you net bewopen thus ne fynde
But ye wol haue him wode out of his minde

For wyst he that ye farde in thys manere
He wolde hym selfe flee: and yf I wende
To haue thys fare, he shulde not come here
For all the good that Priam maye dyspende
For to what fyne he wolde anone pretende
That know we I well, and for thy yet I sey
Do leaue this sorowe, or plainly he wol dey

And shapeth you hys sorowe for to abredge
And not encrease, lefe nece swete
Beth rather to hym cause of plat then edge
And wh some wysedom, ye hys sorowes bete
what helpeth it to wepen full a strete
Or though ye both in salte teeres dreynte
Bet is a tyme of cure aye then of pleynte

I meane thus, whé I hym hether bringe
Sens ye be wyse, and both of one assent
Do shapeth howe to dissourbe your goynge
Or come ayen sone after ye be went
women ben wyse, in short auysement
And let sene howe your wyt shall auayle
And what that I may helpe, it shal not fayle

So quod Creseyde and vncle truely
I shall done all my myght me to restrayne
From wepynge in hys syght, and besely
Hym for to glad, I shall done all my payne
And in my herte seken euery bayne
yf to thys sore there maye ben founden salue
It shall not lacke certayne on myne halue

Both Pandarus, and Troylus he sought
Till in a temple he founde hym al alone
As he that of hys lyfe no lenger rought
But to the pytouse goddes euerychone
Full tendrely he prayed, and made hys mone
To done hym sone out of thys worlde to pace
For wel he thought ther was non other grace

And shortly all the soth for to seye
He was so fallen in dyspayre that day
That veterly he shope him for to deye
For ryght thus was hys argument all way
He sayd he nas but lorne welaway
For all that cometh, cometh by necessite
Thus to be lorne is my destyne

For certaynly thys wote I well he sayd
That forsyght of diuyne purueyaunce
Had sene alwaye me to forgone Creseyde
Sens god seeth euery thing out of doutaunce
And hem dysposeth through hys ordynaunce
In hys merytes sothly for to be
As they shull comen by predestyne

But natheleslle alas, whom shall I leue
For there ben great clerkes many one
That destynte, through argumentes preue
And some sayne that nedely there is none
But that free choyce is yeuen vs euerychone
O welawaye, so sygh arne clerkes olde
That I not whose opinion I maye holde

For some men sayne, ꝑ god seeth al byforne
Ne god maye not dysceyued ben parde
Thā mote it fallen, though mé had it swore
That purueiaunce hath sene beforne to be
wherfore I saye, that from eterne yf he
Hath wyst beforn our thoust eke as our dede
We haue no fre choyce, as these clerkes rede

For other thought, nor other dede also
Myght neuer ben, but suche as purueyaunce
whych maye not ben dysceyued neuer mo
Hath seled byforne, wythouten ignoraunce
For yf there myght ben a variaunce
To wrythen out fro goddes purueynge
There were no prescience of thynge comynge

But it were rather an opinion
Uncertayne, and no stedfast foreseyng
And certes that were an abusyon
That god shuld haue no parfite clere weting
Afore then we men, ꝑ haue doutous weining
But such an errour vpon god to gesse
were false & foule, and wycked cursednesse

Eke thys is an opinion of some
That haue her top ful hygh & smoth yshore
They sayn right thus, ꝑ thing is not to come
For that the prescience hath sene before
That it shall come, but they sayne ꝑ therfore
That it shall come, therfore the purueyaunce
wote it beforne wythouten ignoraunce

And in thys maner thys necessyte
Returneth in hys parte contrary agayne
For nedefully behoueth it not to be
That thylke thynges fallen in certayne
That be purueyed, but nedfully as they sayn

Behoueth

Behoueth it that thynges whych that fall
That they in certayne ben purueyed all

I meane as though I laboured me in this
To enquyre which thige cause of which thig
As whether that the prescięce of god is (be
The certayne cause of the necessite
Of thynges that to comen be pardy
Or of necessite of thynge comynge
Because certayne of the purueyeng

But now ne enforce I me not in shewyng
How ỳ ordre of ỳ causes stãt, but wel wote I
That it behoueth that the befallyng
Of thynges wyst before certaynly
Be necessary, all semе it not therby
That prescience put fallynge necessayre
To thynge to come, all fall it foule or fayre

For yf there syt a man yonde on a see
That by necessite behoueth it
That certes thyne opinion soth be
That weneſt or conjecteſt that he syt
And further ouer, nowe ayenwarde yet
Lo, ryght so is it on the parte contrarye
As thus, nowe herken for I woll not tarye

I saye that yf the opinion of the
Be soth for that he syt, then saye I thys
That he mote sytten by necessyte
And thus necessyte in eyther is
For in hym nede of syttynge is ywys
And in the nede of soth, and thus forsoth
There mote necessite ben in you both

But thou mayſt sayne ỳ mã syt not therfore
That thyne opinion of hys syttynge soth is
But rather for the man sat there before
Therfore is thyne opinion soth ywys
And I saye, though the cause of soth of thys
Cometh of hys syttynge, yet necessite
Is entrechaunged, both in hem and in the

Thus in the same wyse out of doutaunce
I maye well maken, as it semeth me
Thy reasonynge of goddes purueyaunce
And of the thynges that to comen be
By whych reason men may well yse
That thylke thynges that in erth fall
That by necessite they comen all

For al though that forthing shal come ywys
Therfore is it purueyd certaynly
Not that it cometh for it purueyed is
Yet natheleſſe behoueth it nedefully
That thynge to come be purueyed truely
Or els thinges that purueyed be
That they betyden by necessyte

And this sufficeth ryght ynough certayne
For to destroye our free choyce euerydel
But nowe is thys abusyon to sayne
That fallynge of the thynges temporel
Is cause of the goddes prescience eternell
Nowe truely that is a false sentence
That thing to come shuld cause his prescięce

what might I wene ỳ I had such a thought
But that god purueyeth thynge ỳ is to come
For that it is to come, and els nought
So might I wene that thinges al and some
That whylom ben bysal and ouercome
Ben cause of thylke souerayne purueyaunce
That forewote all, wythouten ignoraunce

And oueral thys, yet say I more therto
That right as whę I wote there is a thinge
Iwys that thynge mote nedefully be so
Eke ryght so, when I wote a thing comyng
So mote it come, and thus the befallynge
Of thynges that ben wyst before the tyde
They nowe not ben eschewed on no syde

Thę sayd he thus, almyghty Joue in trone
That woteſt of al thys thyng ỳ sothfastneſſe
Rewe on my sorowe, and do me dyen sone
Or bryngе Creseyde ỳ me fro thys dyſtreſſe
And whyle he was in all thys heyneſſe
Dysputynge wyth hym selfe in thys matere
Came Pandare in, ỳ sayd as ye may here

O myghty god (ỳ Pandarus) in trone
Eyghe, who sawe euer a wyse man fare so
why Troylus, what thynkeſt thou to done
Hast thou suche luſte to ben thyne owne foe
what parde, yet is not Creseyde ago
why lyſt the so thy selfe forgone for drede
That in thyne herd, thyne eyen semen dede

Hast thou not lyued many a yere before
wythouten her and sarde full well at ease
Arte thou for her and for none other borne
Hath kynde ỳ wrought all only her to pleaſe
Let be and thynke ryght thus in thy dyseaſe

That

That in ỳ dyce, right as there falle chaūces
Ryght so in loue there come & go pleſaūces.

And yet this is a wonder mooſt of all
why thou thus ſorowest ſith thou wouſt nat
Touching her going, how ỳ it ſhal fall (yet
Ne yf ſhe can her ſelfe diſtourben it
Thou haſt nat yet aſſayed all her wyt
A man maye al betyme his necke bede
whan it ſhall of, and ſorowen at the nede

For thy take hede of all that I ſhal ſay
I haue with her yſpoke and longe yde
So as accorded was betwyxt vs twey
And euermo me thynketh thus, that ſhe
Hath ſomwhat in her hertes priuitie
wherwith ſhe can, yf I ſhall aryght rede
Diſturde al this of which thou art in drede

For which my counſayl is whan it is night
Thou to her go, and make of this an ende
And blyſful Juno, through her gret myght
Shal (as I hope) her grace vnto vs ſende
Myne hert ſeeth certayne ſhe ſhal nat wend
And for thy put thy hert a whyle in reſt
And holde thy purpoſe, for it is the beſt.

This Troylus anſwerde, and ſyghed ſore
Thou ſayeſt tryght wel, & I wil do tryght ſo
And what him liſt, he ſayd vnto him more
And whan it was tyme for to go
Full priuely hym ſelfe withouten mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done
And how they wrought I ſhal you tell ſone

Soth is, that whan they gone firſt to mete
So gan the payne her hertes for to twyſt
That neyther of hem other myght grete
But hem in armes toke, and after kyſt
The laſſe wofull of hem both nyſt
wher ỳ he was, ne might o word out bring
As I ſayd erſt, for wo and for ſobbyng

The wofull teares that they letten fal
As bytter weren out of teres kynde
For payne, as is lignealoes, or gall
So bytter teeres wept nat as I fynde
The wofull Myrra through ỳ bark & rynd
That in this world ther nis ſo hard an hert
That nold haue rewed on her paines ſmert

But whan her wofull werry goſtes twayne
Returned ben there, as hem ought to dwell
And that ſomwhat to weaken gan ỳ payne
By length of playnt, & cobben gan the wel
Of her teares, and the hert vnſwell
wt broke voyce al horſe, for thright Creſeyde
To Troylus theſe ylke wordes ſayde

O Joue I dye, and mercy the beſeche
Helpe Troylus, & therwith all her face
Upon his breſt ſhe layde, and loſt ſpeche
Her woful ſpryt from his propre place
Ryght wt the worde away in poynt to pace
And thus ſhe lyth wt hewes pale and greue
That whylom freſh & fayreſt was to ſeue.

This Troylus that on her gan beholde
Cleping her name, and ſhe lay as for deed
wouten anſwer, & felt her lymmes colde
Her eyen throwen vpwarde to her heed
This ſorouful mā can nowe non other rede
But oft tyme her colde mouth he kyſt
wher him was wo, god & him ſelfe it wyſt.

He riſeth him vp, & long ſtreight he her layd
For ſigne of lyfe for ought he can or may
Can he none fynde in nothing of Creſeyde
For which his ſongē ful oft is wela way
But whan he ſawe that ſpecheleſſe ſhe laye
wt ſorouſull voyce, & herte of blyſſe all bare
He ſayd, how ſhe was fro this world yfare

So after that he longe had her cōplayned
His hōdes wronge, & ſayd that was to ſeye
And wt his teeres ſalte her breſt betrayned
He gan tho teeres wypen of full dreye
And pytouſly gan for the ſoule preye
And ſayd, lorde that ſet art in thy trone
Rewe eke on me, for I ſhal folowe her ſone

She colde was, and without ſentement
For ought he wot, for dreth felt ne none
And thus was him a preignant argument
That ſhe was forth out of this world agon
And whā he ſawe ther was non other won
He gan her lymmes dreſſe in ſuche manere
As men do on hem ỳ ſhall ben layen on bere

And after this, with ſterne and cruel herte
His ſwerde anon out of his ſheth he twight
Him ſelf to ſleen, howe ſore that him ſmerte
So that his ſoule her ſoule folowē myght
Ther as the dome of Mynos wold it dight
Syth loue and cruell fortune it ne wolde

An That

That in this worlde he lenger lyuen ſhold

Than ſayd he thus, fulfyld of high diſdayn
O cruel Ioue, and thou fortune aduerſe
This al a ſome that falſely haue ye ſlayne
Creſeyde, and ſyth ye may do me no werſe
Fye on your myght and worthes ſo dyuerſe
Thus cowardly ye ſhal me neuer wyn
There ſhall no deth me fro my lady twyn.

For I this world ſith ye haue ſlayn her thus
Wol let and folowe her ſpyryte ſowe or bye
Shall neuer louer ſayne, that Troylus
Dare nat for feare with his lady dye
For certayne I woll beare her company
But ſyth ye wol nat ſuffre vs lyuen here
Yet ſuffreth that our ſoules ben yfere

And thou cyte, in which I lyue in wo
And thou Priam, and brethren al yfere
And thou my mother, farewel for I go
And Attropoſe make redy thou my bere
And thou Creſeyde, o ſwete herte dere
Receyue now my ſpyryte, wolde he ſey
With ſwerde at herte all redy for to dreye

But as god wolde, of ſwough ſhe abrayde
And gan to ſygh, and Troylus ſhe cryde
And he anſwerd, lady myne Creſeyde
Lyue ye yet? and let his ſwerde downe glyde
Yea herte myne, that thanked be cupyde
(Quod ſhe) and therwithal ſhe ſore ſyght
And he began to glad her as he myght

Toke her in his armes two, and kyſt her ofte
And her to glad, he dyd all his entent
For which her gooſt ful flyckered aye a loft
Into her woful herte ayen it went
But at the laſt, as that her eye glent
Aſyde, anon ſhe gan his ſwoorde eſpye
As it laye bare, and gan for feare crye.

And aſked hym, why he had it out drawe
And Troylus anon the cauſe her tolde
And how hi ſelf therwith he wold haue ſlawe
For which Creſeyd vpon hym gan beholde
And gan hym in her armes faſt folde
And ſayde: o mercy god, to which a dede
Alas how nygh we weren both deed

Than yf I had ſpoken, as grace was
Ye wolde haue ſlayne your ſelf anon (quod ſhe)
Yea doutleſſe: and ſhe anſwerde alas
For by that ylke lorde that made me
I nolde a forlonge way on lyue haue be
After your deth to haue ben crowned quene
Of al ſ londe the ſunne on ſhyneth ſhene

But with this ſelue ſwerd, which ſ here is
Wyl ſelfe I wolde haue ſlayne (quod ſhe) tho
But ho, for we haue eyght ynough of this
And let vs ryſe, and ſtreyght to bed go
And there let vs ſpeken of our wo
For by that matter, which that I ſe brene
Knowe I ful well, that day is nat frere hen

Whan they were in her bed in armes folde
Nought was it lyke tho nyghtes here beforn
For pytouſly eche other gan beholde
As they that hadden all her blyſſe ylorne
Bewaylyng aye ſ day that they were borne
Til at ſ laſt this ſorowful wyght Creſeyd
To Troylus theſe ylke wordes ſeyde

Lo herte myne, wel wot ye this (quod ſhe)
That yf a wight alway his wo complayne
And ſeketh nat how holpen for to be
It nys but folye, and encreaſe of payne
And ſyns ſ here aſſembled be we twayne
To fynde bote of wo that we ben in
It were tyme all ſoone to begyn.

I am a woman, as full well ye wot
And as I am aduyſed ſodaynly
So woll I tell you whyle it is whote
Me thynketh thus, that neyther ye nor I
Ought halfe this wo to make ſkylfully
For there is arte ynough for to redreſſe
That yet is myſſe, and fleen this heuynеſſe

Both is, the wo the which we ben in
For ought I wot, for nothyng elſ is
But for the cauſe that we ſhulde twynn
Conſydred al there nys nomore amys
And what is than a remedy vnto this
But that we ſhape vs ſoone for to mete
This all and ſome, my dere herte ſwete

Now that I ſhal well bryngen it about
To come ayen ſone after that I go
Therof am I no maner thyng in dout
For dredeleſſe, within a weke or two
I ſhal ben here, and that it mayebe ſo

By all eyght, and in wordes fewe
I shall you well an heape of wayes shewe

For which I wol not make longe sermon
For tyme ylost may not recouered be
But I wol go to my conclusyon
And to the best in ought that I can se
And for the loue of god forgeue it me
yf I speke ought ayenst your hertes rest
For truly I speke it for the best

Making alway a protestacion
That now these wordes which I shal saye
Nys but to shewen you my mocion
To fynde vnto our helpe the best waye
And taketh it none otherwyse I pray
For in effect, what so ye me cómaunde
That wol I don, for that is no demaunde

Now herkeneth this ye haue wel vnderstód
My going graunted is by parlyment
So ferforth ꝑ it may not ben withstonde
For all this worlde as by my iudgement
And syth ther helpeth non aduysement
To letten it, let it passe out of mynde
And let vs shape a better way to fynde

The soth is, the tweyning of vs twayne
wol vs disease, and cruelly anoye
But him behoueth somtyme haue a payne
That serueth loue, yf that he wol haue ioye
And syth I shal no ferther out of Troye
Thá I may ryde ayen on halfe a morowe
It ought lasse causen vs for to sorowe

So as I shal not so ben hyd in mewe
That day by day, myne owne hertes dere
Syns well I wot that it is nowe a trewe
ye shall ful well all myne estate here
And er that truce is don, I shal ben here
Than haue ye both Antenor ywon
And me also beth glad now yf ye con

And think right thus, Creseyd is now agon
But what, she shal come hastely ayen
And whan alas - by god, so right anon
Er dayes ten, this dare I safely sayne
And than at erst shall we be so fayne
So as we shall togythers euer dwell
That all this worlde ne might our blysse tell

I se that oft tyme, there as we ben nowe
That for the best our counsayl for to hyde
ye speake not with me, nor I with you
In fourtenyght, ne se ye go ne ryde
May ye nat ten dayes than abyde
For myne honour in suche auenture
I wys ye mowe els lyte endure

ye knowe eke howe that al my kyn is here
But if that only it my father be
And eke myne other thynges al yfere
And namely my dere herte ye
whom that I nolde leauen for to se
For al this world as wide as it hath space
Or els se I neuer Ioues face

why trowe ye my father in this wyse
Coueyteth so to se me, but for drede
Lest in this towne that folkes me dispyse
Bycause of him, for his vnhappy dede
what wote my father what lyfe that I lede
For if he wyste in Troye howe wel I fare
Vs nedeth for my wendyng nat to care

Yea, that euery day eke more and more
Men treate of peace, and it supposed is
That men the quene Heleyne shal restore
And grekes vs restore that is mys
So though there were cófort none but this
That men purposen peace on euery syde
Ye may the better at ease of herte abyde

For yf that it be peace, myne herte dere
The nature of the peace mote nedes dryue
That men must entercómune yfere
And to and fro eke ryde and gone as blyue
Al day as thycke as been flyen fró an hyue
And euery wyght haue lyberte to bleue
where as him lyst, the bet withouten leue

And though so be ꝑ peace ther may be none
Yet hither though ther neuer peace ne were
I must come, for whyder shulde I gone
Or how mischaunce shulde I dwel there
Amonge tho men of armes euer in feare
For which as wysely god my soule rede
I can nat sene wherof ye shulde drede

Haue here another way yf it so be
That al this thing ne may you nat suffyse
My father as ye knowen well parde
Is olde, and eke ful of couetyse
And I right now haue founden all the gyse

withouten net, wherwith I shal hym hente
And herkeneth now yf that ye wyl assente

Lo Troylus, men sayne that ful harde it is
The wolfe ful, and the weder hole to haue
This is to sayne, that men ful oft twys
Wote spenden part, þ remnaunt for to saue
For aye with gold men may the hert graue
Of hym that set is vpon couetyse
And how I meane I shal it you deuyse

The mouable, which þ I haue in this toun
Vnto my father shall I take and say
That right for trust, and for saluacioun
It sent is, from a frende of his or tway
The which frendes feruently him praye
To sende after more, and that in hye
whyle þ this town stant thus in ieopardy

And that shalbe of golde an huge quantitie
Thus shal I sayne, but lest folke it espyde
This may be sent by no wyght but by me
I shal eke shewen hym, yf peace betyde
what frendes that I haue on euery syde
Towarde the court, to don the wrath pace
Of Priamus, and do hym stonde in grace

So what for o thyng and for other swete
I shall him enchaunten with my sawes
That right in heuē his soul is, shal he mete
For all Apollo, or his clerkes lawes
Or calculyng auayleth nat thre hawes
Delyte of golde shall so his soule blende
That as my lyst, I shall well make an ende

And yf he wolde ought by his sorte it preue
If that I lye, in certayne I shal fonde
Distourben him, and plucke by the sleue
Makyng his sorte, & bearen hym on honde
He hath nat well the goddes vnderstonde
For goddes speke in amphibologies
And for o soth, they tellen twenty lyes

Eke vnder fonde first goddes I suppose
Thus shall I sayne, & that his coward hert
Made hym amysse the goddes text to glose
whan he for ferde out of Delphos stert
And but I make hym sone to conuert
And don my rede within a day or twey
I woll to you obliege me to deye.

And truly, as wryten well I fynde
That al this thing was sayd of good entēt
And that her hert true was and kynde
Towardes him, & spake right as she ment
And þ she starfe for wo nigh whan she went
And was in purpose euer to be trewe
Thus wryten they þ of her werkes knewe

This Troylus with hert and eares spradde
Herde all this thyng deuysed two and fro
And verily it semed that he had
The selue wyt, but yet to let her go
His hert myssaue hym euermo
But fynally he gan his hert wrest
To trusten her, and take it for the best

For which the great fury of his penaunce
was queynt vē hope, ther vē hem betwene
Began for to ioye the amorous daunce
And as þ brydes whan the sun is shene
Delyten in her songe, in leues grene
Right so the wordes, that they spake yfere
Delyten hem, and make hem hertes clere.

But natheles, the wendyng of Creseyde
For al this would may not out of his mynd
For which ful oft he pytously her preyde
That of her heest he might her true fynde
And sayd her, certes yf ye be kynde
And but ye come at day set in Troye
Me shal I neuer haue heale, honour ne ioye

For all so soth as sunne vp ryst a morowe
And god so wysely thou me wofull wretche
To rest bryng out of this cruell sorowe
I woll my seluen slee yf that ye dretche
But of my deth though lyte be to recche
yet er that ye me causen so to smert
Dwell rather here myne owne swete herte.

For truly myne owne lady dere
The sleyghtes yet þ I haue herde you stere
Full shapely ben to fallen all yfere
For thus men sayth, þ one thynketh þ bere
But al another thynketh the ledere
Your syre is wyse, and sayd is out of drede
Men may the wyse out ren, & not out rede

It is full harde to halten vnespyed
Before a creple, for he can the crafte
Your father is in sleyght as Argus eyed
For al be it that his mouable is him bynaft
His olde sleyght is yet so with hym lafte

ye

ye shall nat blende hym for your wománhed
Ne sayne atyght, and that is al my drede

I not yf peace shall euermo betyde
But peace or no, for ernest ne for game
I wot syth Calcas on the grekes syde
hath ones ben, and lost so foule his name
he dar nomore come here agayne for shame
For which that we, for ought I can espy
To trusten on, nys but a fantasye.

ye shal eke sene your father shal you glose
To ben a wyse, and as he can wel preche
he shal some greke so preyse and wel alose
That rauysshen he shal you with his speche
Or do you don by force as he shall teache
And Troylus on whom ye nyll haue routh
Shall causeles so steruen in his trouth.

And ouer all this your father shal despyse
Vs al, and sayn this citie is but lorne
And that thassege neuer shal aryse
For why the grekes haue it all sworne
Tyl we be slayne, & down our walles borne
And thus he shal you with his wordes fere
That aye drede I, that ye wol bleuen there

ye shall eke sene so many a lusty knyght
Amonge the grekes full of worthynesse
And eche of hem with hert, wyt & myght
To plesen you don all his besynesse
That ye shull dullen of the rudynesse
Of sely Trovans, but yf routh
Remorde you, or vertue of your trouth

And this to me so grenous is to thynke
That from my brest it wol my soule rende
Ne dredlesse in me there may not synke
O good opinyon, yf that ye wende
For why your fathers sleyght wol vs shend
And yf ye gone, as I haue tolde you yore
So thynk I nam but deed, withouten more

For which with humble, true, & pitous hert
A thousande tymes mercy I you praye
So reweth on myne aspre paynes smert
And doth somwhat, as that I shall you say
And let vs stele away betwyx vs tway
And thinke ỳ folye is whā a man maye chese
For accident his substaunce for to lese

I meane thus, that syns we nowe or day
wel steale awaye, and doen togyther so
what wyt were it to putten it in assaye
(In case ye shulden to your father go)
If that ye myghten come ayen or no
Thus meane I that were a great folly
To put that sykernesse in ieopardy

And vulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of treasour may we both with vs lede
Ynough to lyue in honour and pleasaunce
Tyl vnto tyme that we shal ben deed
And thus we may eschewen al this drede
For euery other wayt ye can recorde
Syne hert pwys may therwith nat accorde.

And hardely ne dredeth no pouertie
For I haue kyn and frendes eis where
That though we comen in our bare sherte
Vs shulde neyther lacke golde ne gere
But ben honoured whyle we dwelten there
And go we anon, for as in myne intent
This is the best, yf that ye woll assent

Creseyde with a sygh, syght in this wyse
Answerde: ywys my dere herte true
we maye wel steale away, as ye deuyse
And lynden suche vnthryfty wayes newe
But afterwarde full sore it woll vs rewe
And helpe me god so at my moost nede
As causeles ye suffren all this drede

For thylke day that I for cherysshyng
Or drede of father, or for any other wyght
Or for estate, delyte, or for wedding
Be false to you my Troylus my knyght
Saturnus doughter Iuno through her
As wode as Athamãt do me dwelle
Eternally with Ixyr in the pyt of hell

And this on euery god celestiall
I sweare it you, and eke on eche goddesse
On euery nymphe, and deitie infernall
On Satyry and Fauny more and lesse
That halfe goddes ben of wildernesse
And Attropos my threde of lyfe to brest
If I be false, now trowe me yf ye lest.

And thou Mynoys that as an arowe clere
Through Troy rennest aye downward to p se
Be wytnesse of this worde ỳ sayd is here
That ylke daye that I vntrue be
To Troylus myne owne hertt free

That thou returne bakwarde to thy well
And I with body and soule syke to hell

But that ye speke away thus for to go
And leten al your frendes god forbede
For any woman that ye shulden so
And namly syns Troy hath now such nede
Of helpe, and eke of o thyng taketh hede
yf this were wist, my lyfe laye in balaunce
And your honour, god shylde vs from myf-
(chaunce.

And yf so be that peace hereafter betake
As all daye heppeth after angre game
why lorde ỳ sorowe & wo ye wolden make
That ye ne durst come ayen for shame
And er that ye ieoparden so your name
Beth nat to hasty in this hote fare
For hasty man ne wanteth neuer care

what trowe ye the people eke al about
wolde of it say: it is ful lyght to arede
They wolden say, and swere it out of dout
That loue ne drawe you nat to do this dede
But lust voluptuous, and cowarde drede
Thus were all lost twys myne hert dere
Your honour, which ỳ now shyneth clere

And also thynketh on myne honestie
That floureth yet, how foul I shuld it shed
And with what fylth it spotted shulde be
If in this forme I shoulde with you wende
Ne though I lyued vnto the worldes ende
My name shulde I neuer ayenwarde wyn
Thus wer I lost, and ỳ were routh & synne

And for thy, flee with reason al this hete
Wen sayne the sufferaunt ouercometh parde
Eke who so wol haue lefe, he lefe mote lete
Thus maketh vertue of necessitie
By patience, and thynke that lorde is he
Of fortune aye ỳ nought wol of her recche
And she ne dauteth no wight but a wrecche

And trusteth this, that certes hert swete
Or Phebus suster Lucina the shene
The Lyon passe out of this Ariete
I wol ben here withouten any wene
I mene, as helpe me Iuno heuens quene
The tenth day, but if that death me assayle
I woll you sene withouten any fayle

And now so thus be soth (quod Troylus)
I shall well suffre vnto the tenth daye
Syns that I se, that nedes it mote be thus
But for the loue of god, yf it be maye
So let vs stelen priuely away
For euer in one, as for to lyuen in rest
Wyne hert sayth that it woll be the best

O mercy god, what lyfe is this (q̃ she)
Alas, ye slee me thus for very tene
I se well now that ye mystrusten me
For by your wordes it is well sene
Now for the loue of Cithia the shene
Mistrust me nat thus causeles for routh
Sis to be tru, I haue you plight my trouth

And thynketh wel, that sõtyme it was wyt
To spende a tyme, a tyme for to wyn
Ne parde lorne I nat fro you yet
Though that we ben a daye or two a twyn
Driue out tho fantasyes you within
And trusteth me, & leaueth eke your sorowe
Or here my trouth, I wyl nat lyue tyll mo-
rowe.

For if ye wyst how sore it doth me smerte
Ye wold not cease of this, for god thou wost
The pure spyrit wepeth in myne herte
To sene you wepen, which ỳ I loue moost
And that I mote gon vnto the grekes host
Yea nere it that I wyst a remedye
To come ayen, ryght here I wolde dye

But certes I am not so nyce a wyght
That I ne can ymagynen away
To come ayen that daye that I haue hyght
For who may holden a thyng ỳ wol away
My father nought, for all his queynt playe
And by my thrift my wendyng out of Troy
An other daye shall turne vs all to ioye.

For thy with all myne hert I you beseche
yf that you lyst done ought for my prayer
And for ỳ loue which that I loue you eke
That er that I departe fro you here
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I may you sene, that ye may bring at rest
Wyne herte, which is at poynt to brest

And ouer all this I praye you (q̃ she) tho
Wyne owne hertes sothfast suffysaunce
Syth I am thyne all hole withouten mo
That whyle that I am absent, no plesaunce
Of other, do me fro your remembraunce

For

For I am euer agast, for why men rede
That loue is thyng aye ful of bely drede

For in thys worlde there leueth lady none
If that I were untrewe, as god defende
That so betrayed were, or wo begone
As I, that al trouth in you entende
And doutlesse, yf that iche other wende
I were but deed, and er ye cause fynde
For goddes loue, so beth me naught unkind

To this answered Troylus, and seyde
Now god, to whō there nys no cause ywrie
Be glade, as wys I neuer unto Creseyde
Sith thylke day I saw her fyrst with eye
was false, ne neuer shal tyl that I dye
At shorte wordes, wel ye may me leue
I can no more, it shal be founde at preue

Graūt mercy it good hert myn ywis (q̄ she)
And blyssful Venus let me neuer sterue
Er I may stonde at pleasaunce in degre
To quyte him wel, that so wel can deserue
And whyle ꝑ god my wyt wyl me conserue
I shal so done, so trewe I haue you founde
That aye honour to me ward shall rebound

For trusteth wel, that your estate royal
Ne veyne delyte, nor onely worthynesse
Of you in werre or turnay marcial
Ne pompe, array, nobley, or eke rychesse
Ne made me to rewe on your distresse
But moral vertue, grounded upon trouth
That was ꝑ cause I first had on you routh

Eke gentyl hert, and manhede that ye had
And that ye had (as me thought) in despyte
Euery thyng that sowned in to bad
And rudenesse, and peoplysshe appetyte
And that your reason bridled your delyte
This made abouen euery creature
ꝑ I was yours, & shal while I may endure

And thys may lengthe of yeres nat fordo
Ne remuable fortune deface
But Jupitter that of his myght may do
The sorouful to be glad, so yeue vs grace
Er nyghtes ten, to meten in this place
So that it may your hert and myn suffyse
And fareth now wel, for time is that ye ryse

And after that they longe yplayned had
And ofte ykyst, and strayte in armes folde
The day gan ryse, and Troylus him clad
And rufully his lady gan beholde
As he that felte dethes cares colde
And to her grace he gan hym recōmaunde
where he was wo, this holde I no demaūde

For mannes heed ymaginen ne can
Ne entendement consyder, ne tonge tel
The cruel paynes of this sorouful man
That passen euery torment downe in hel
For whan he sawe that she ne might dwel
which that his soule out of his herte rent
withouté more, out of the chambre he went

Explicit li.iiii. Et incipit li.v.



Prochen gan the fatall de-
styne
That Joues hathe in dispo-
sycioun
And to you angrye Parcas
sustren thre
Committeth to done, execucioun
For which Creseyde must out of the toun
And Troylus shal dwel forth in pyne
Tyl Lachesis his threde no lenger twyne

The golde tressed Phebus hyghe on lofte
Thryse had al with his beames clere
The snowes molt, and zephirus as ofte
Ybrought ayen the tender leaues grene
Sens that the sonne of Eccuba the quene
Began to loue her first, for who his sorowe
was al, that she departe shulde a morowe

Ful redy was at prime Diomede
Creseyde unto the grekes hoost to leed
For sorowe of which, she felte her hert blede
As she that nyste what was best to reed
And trewly, as men in bookes reed
Men wyst neuer woman haue the care
Ne was so lothe out of a towne to fare

Thys Troylus wythouten rede or lore
As man that hath his toyes eke forlore
was wayting on hys lady euer more
As she that was sothfast croppe and more
Of al his lust or toyes here tofore
But Troylus now fare wel al thy loye
For shalte thou neuer sene her efte in Troye

Soothe is, ꝑ whyle he bade in this manere
He gan his wo ful manly for to hyde
That wel vneth it sene was in his chere
But at the yate there she shulde out ryde
With certayne folke he houed her to abyde
So wo begon, al wolde he not him playne
That on hys horse vneth he sate for payne

For ire he quoke, so his herte gnawe
whan Diomede on horse gan him dyght
And sayd vnto him selfe thys vyle sawe
Alas (q he) thus foule a wretchydnesse
why suffre I it, why nyl I it redresse,
were it nat bet at ones for to dye
Than euermore in langour thus to crye,

why nyl I make at ones ryche and poore
To haue ynough to done et that the go,
why nyl I bringe al Troye vpon a roore
why nyl I sleen thys Diomede also,
why nyl I rather wyth a man or two
Steale her away, why wol I this endure,
why nyl I helpen to myne owne cure,

But why he nolde done so fel a dede
That shal I sayne, & why hym lyste it spare
He had in herte alway a maner drede
Leste that Creseyde, in rumour of thys fare
Shulde haue ben slayn, lo this was all hys
And els certayne, as I sayd yore (care
He had it done, withouten wordes more

Creseyde whan she redy was to ryde
Ful sorowfully she sighed, and sayd alas
But forth she mote, for aught ꝑ may betyde
And forth she rydeth ful sorowfully a paas
There is none other remedye in this caas
wat wonder is, though that her sore smerte
whan she forgoth her owne swete herte

Thys Troylus in gyse of curtesye
wyth hauke on hande, & with an huge route
Of knyghtes, rode and dyd her companye
Passyng al the valey, ferre wythout
And ferther wold haue rydden out of doute
Ful fayne, and wo was hym to gon so sone
But turne he must, and it was eke to done

And ryght wyth that was Antenor yrome
Out of the grekes hoste, and euery wyght
was of hym glad, & sayd he was welcome
And Troylus al nere hys herte lyght
He payned hym, wyth al hys ful myght
Hym to wythholde of wepyng at leste
And Antenor he kyste, and made feste

And therwythal he must his leaue take
And cast his eyes vpon her pytously
And nere he rode, hys cause for to make
To take her by the honde al sobrely
And lorde so she gan wepen tenderly
And he ful softe and slygtly gan her sey
Now holde your day, and do me not to dey

with that hys courser turned he aboute
wyth face pale, and vnto Diomede
No worde he spake, ne none of al his route
Of which the sonne of Tydeus toke hede
As he that kouth more than the crede
In such a crafte, and by the rayne her hente
And Troylus to Troye, homwardes went

This Diomede, that ladde her by the bridel
whan that he saw the folke of Troye away
Thought, al my labour shal not ben on ydel
If that I may, for somwhat shal I say
For at the worste, a shorte may our way
I haue herde say eke, tymes twyse twelue
He is a foole that wol forgete hym selue

But nathelesse, thys thought he wel ynough
That certaynly I am about nought
If that I spekе of loue, or make it thought
For doutelesse, yf she haue in her thought
Him that I gesse, he may not ben ybrought
So sone away, but I shal fynde a meane
That she shal not yet wete what I meane

Thus Diomede, as he that couthe his gode
wha this was don, gan falle forth in speche
Of this and that, and aske why she stode
In such disease, and gan her eke beseche
That yf that he encreasen myght or eche
wyth any thyng her ease, that she sholde
Comaund it him, and sayd he done it wolde

For trewly he swore her as a knyght
ꝑ ther nas thyng w̄ which he myght her plese
That he nolde don hys payne, & al his myght
To don it, for to done her herte an ese
And prayde her she wolde her sorowe apese
And sayd, ywys we grekes can haue love
To honouren you, as well as folke of Troy

He

He said eke thus, I wote you thinketh straūg
No wonder is, for it is to you newe
Thacqueyntaūce of these troyans to chaūg
For folke of Grece, that ye neuer knewe
But wolde neuer god, but yf as trewe
I gesse ye shuld amonge vs al fynde
As any troyan is, and eke as kynde

And bycause I swore you ryght nowe
To ben your frende, & helpiy to my might
And for that more acqueintaunce eke of you
Haue I had, than another straunger wight
So fro this forth, I pray you daye & nyght
Cōmaūdeth me, howe sore that me smerte
To done, al that may lyke vnto your herte

And that ye me wold, as your brother trest
And taketh nat my frendshyp in dispyte
Though your sorowes ben for thinges gret
Not I nat why, but out of more respyte
Myn hert hath for to amend it great delyte
And yf I may your harmes nat redresse
I am ryght sory for your heuynesse

For though ye troyans vp vs grekes wroth
Haue many a day ben: alway yet parde
O god of loue, in soth we serue both
And for the loue of god my lady free
Who so ye hate, as beth not wroth wyth me
For trewly there can no wyght you serue
That halfe so loth your wrath wolde deserue

And nere it that we ben so nere the tent
Of Calcas, which that sene vs both may
I wolde of thys you tel al myne entent
But thys enseled tyl another day
yeue me your hande, I am and shal be aye
god helpe me so, while ỳ my life may endure
Your owne, abouen euery creature

Thus saide I neuer er now to womā borne
For god myne herte as wysely glade so
I loued neuer woman here beforne
As paramours, ne neuer shal no mo
And for the loue of god be not my foe
Al can I nat to you my lady dere
Complayne aryght, for I am yet to lere

And wōdreth nought myn owne lady bryght
Though ỳ I speke of loue to you thus blyue
For I haue herde of thys of many a wyght
Hath loued thynge he neuer sawe his lyue

Eke I am not of power for to stryue
Ayenst the god of loue, but hym obey
I wol alway, and mercy I you pray

There beth so worthy knyghtes in the place
And ye so fayre, that euerych of hem al
wol payne hym to stonden in your grace
But myght me so fayre a grace tal
That ye me for your seruaunte wolde cal
So lowly, ne so trewly you serue
Nyl none of hem, as I shal tyl I sterue

Creseyde vnto that purpose lyte answerde
As she that was wyth sorowe oppressed
That in effecte she naught his tales herde
But here & there, nowe here a worde or two
Her thought her sorouful hert brast a two
For whan she gan her father fayre espye
Wel nyghe downe of her horse she gan to sye

But nathelesse she thonketh Diomede
Of al his trauayle and his good chere
And that him lyst his frendshyp to her bede
And she accepteth it in good maniere
And wol do fayne that is him lefe and dere
And trusteth hym she wold, & wel she myght
As sayd she, and from her horse she alyght

Her father hath her in his armes nōme
& twēty times he kyst his doughter swete
And sayd: O dere doughter mine welcome
She sayd eke, she was fayne vp him to mete
And forth they muse, myld, and manusete
But here I leaue her wyth her father dwell
And forth I wol of Troylus you tell

To Troye is come this woful Troylus
In sore wo abouen al sorowes smerte
With felon loke, and face dispytous
Tho sodaynly downe fro his horse he sterte
And through his paleys with swolne herte
To chābre he went, of nothyng toke he hede
Ne non to him dare speke a worde for drede

And there his sorowes that he spared had
He yaue an issue large, and dethe he cryde
And in his throwes, frenetyke and mad
He curseth Juno, Apollo, and eke Cupide
He curseth Bachus, Ceres, and Cypride
His byrth, him selfe, his fate, & eke nature
And saue his lady, euery creature

To

To bed he goth and wrythyth there & turneth
In fyre, as doth he Ixion in hell
and in this wyse he nygh tyl day sojourneth
But tho began his herte alyte bul wel
Through treres, which þ gomen wp to wel
And pytously he cryed upon Creseyde
And to hym selfe thus he spake and seyde

where is myne owne lady lefe and dere
where is her white brest, where is it where
where ben her armes, and her eyen clere
That yesterdaye this tyme with me were
Nowe may I wepe alone many a teere
And grasye aboute I may, but in this place
Saue a pylowe, fynde naught to embrace

How shal I don whā shal she come agayne
I not alas, why let I her go
As wolde god I had as tho be slayne
O herte myne Creseyde, O swete so
O lady myne, that I loue and no mo
To whom for euer more myne hert a dowe
Se howe I dye, ye nyll me not reskowe

who seeth you nowe, my ryght lode sterre
who sytteth ryght nowe in your presence
who can comfortu now your hertes werre
Now I am gon, whom reue ye audience
who speketh for my ryght nowe in your absence
Alas no wyght, that is al my care (sence
For wel wote I, as ruell as ye fare

Howe shulde I thus ten daves ful endure
whan I the fyrst nyght haue al thys pene
Howe shal she the sorouful creature
For tendernesse, howe shall she thys sustene
Suche wo for me, o pytous pale, and grene
Shal ben your freshe womanly face
For langour erye turne unto thys place

And whan he fyl in any slombrynges
Anon begyne he shulde for to grone
And dreamen of the dredfullest thynges
That myght ben, as mete he were alone
In place horrible makyng aye hys mone
Or meten that he was amonges al
Hys enemyes, and in her handes fal

And therwithal hys body shulde sterte
And wyth the sterte al sodaynly awake
And such a tremour fele about his herte
That of the feare hys body shulde quake
And therwythal he shulde a noyse make
And seme as though he shulde fal depe
From hygh alofte, and than he wolde wepe

And rewen on hym selfe so pytously
That wonder was to here hys fantasye
Another tyme he shulde myghtely
Comforte hym selfe, and sayne it were a folye
So causeleſſe, suche drede for to haue
And eke begyn his aspre sorowes newe
That euery man might on his paines rewe

who coulde tel al, or fully discryue
His wo, his playnt, hys langour, & his pyne
Nat al the men that han or ben on lyue
Thou reder mayst thy selfe ful wel devyne
That such a wo my wyt can not desyne
Or ydel for to write it shulde I swynke
whan that my wyt is wery it to thynke

On heuen yet the sterres weren sene
Although full pale ywoxen was the moone
And whyten gan the orizonte shene
Al estwarde, as it is wonte to doone
And Phebus werth hys rosy carte soone
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare
whan Troylus hath sent after Pandare

This Pandare, that of al the day before
Ne might hym comen thys Troylus to se
Although he on hys hed it had swore
For with the kyng Priam al day was he
So that it laye nat in his lyberte
No wher to gon, but on þ morowe he went
To Troylus, whan that he for hym sent

For in hys herte he coulde wel deuyne
That Troylus al nyght for sorowe woke
And that he wolde tel hym of hys pyne
Thys knew he well ynough wythout boke
For which to chābre streyght þ way he toke
And Troylus tho sobrely he greette
And on the bed ful sone he gan hym sette

My Pandarus (q Troylus) the sorowe
which that I drie, I may not longe endure
I trowe I shal not lyuen tyl to morowe
For which I wolde alwayes on auenture
To the deuysen of my sepulture
The forme, & of my mouable thou dispone
Ryght as the semeth best is for to done

But

But of the fyre and flambe funerall
In which my body brennen ſhall to giede
And of the freſſt and playes paleſtrall
Of my bygyle, I pray the take good hede
That that be wel, and offre Mars my ſtede
My ſwoorde, myn helme, & leue brother dere
My weid to Pallas preue, that ſhyneth clere

the poudre I which min herte ibrede ſhal turn
That pray I the thou take, and it conſerue
In a veſſel that men clepeth an vrne
Of golde, and to my lady that I ſerue
For loue of whom thus pyteuſly I ſterue
So yeue it her, and do me thys pleſaunce
To prayen her to kepe it for a remembraūce

For wel I fele by my maladye
And by my dreames, nowe and yore ago
Al certaynly, that I mote nedes dye
The oule eke, which that hyght aſcaphylo
Hath after me ſhryght al theſe nyghtes two
& god Mercury, now of me wofull wretche
The ſoule gyde, and whan the lyſte it fetche

Pandare anſwerde, and ſayd Troylus
My dere frende, as I haue tolde the yore
That it is folye for to ſorowen thus
And cauſeleſſe, for which I can no more
But who ſo wol nat trowen rede ne lore
I can not fene in hym no remedye
But let hym worchen with his fantaſye

But Troylus I pray the tel me nowe
If that thou trowe er thys that any wyght
Hath loued paramours as wel as thou
Ye god wote, & fro many a worthy knyght
Hath hys ladye gone a fourtenyght
And he nat yet made haluendele the fare
what nede is the to maken al thys care

Hens day by day thou mayſt thy ſelfuen ſe
That from his loue, or els from hys wyfe
I man mote twynnen of neceſſyte
Yet though he loue her as his owne lyfe
Yet nyl he wyth him ſelfe thus maken ſtryfe
For wel thou woſt my leue brother dere
That alway frendes may not ben yfere

how don thys folke ỳ ſene her lones wedded
By frendes myght as it betydeth ful ofte
And ſene hem in her ſpouſes bed ybedded
God wote they take it wyſely fayre & ſofte
For why, good hope halt vp her herte alofte
And for they can a tyme of ſorowe endure
As tyme hem hurteth, a time doth hem cure

So ſhuldeſt thou endure, and letten flyde
The tyme, and londe to ben gald and lyght
Ten dayes nys not ſo longe to abyde
And ſens ſhe to comen the hath behyght
She nyl her heſte breken for no wyght
For drede the not, that ſhe nyl fynde way
To come ayen, my lyfe that durſt I laye

Thy ſwerueneſſe eke, and al ſuch fantaſye
Dryue out, and let hem fare to mischaunce
For they procede of thy melancolye
That doth the fele in ſlepe al thys penaunce
A ſtrawe for al ſwevenes ſignifyaunce
God helpe me ſo, I counte hem nat abeene
ther wot no mā aright what dremes meene

For preeſtes of the temple tellen thys
That dreames beue the reuelations
Of goddes, and als wel they tel ywys
That they bene infernales illuſyons
And leches ſayne, that of complections
Proceden they of laſte, or glotonye
who wot in ſoth thus what they ſignifye

Eke other ſayne, that through impreſſions
As yf a wyght hath faſte a thinge in mynde
That therof cometh ſuch auiſions
And other ſayne, as they in bokes fynde
That after tymes of the yere by kynde
Ye dreme, & that theffect goth by the mone
But leue no dreame, for it is not to done

well worth of dremes aye theſe olde wyues
And trewly eke, augurye of theſe foules
For feare of which, mē wemen leſe her liues
as rauēs qualm or ſchuchyng of theſe oules
To trowen on it, both falſe and foule is
Alas alas, that ſo noble a creature
As is a man, ſhulde drede ſuch oūdure

For which with al myne herte I the beſeche
Unto thy ſelfe, that al thys thou forveue
And ryſe nowe vp, withouten more ſpeche
And let vs caſt how forth may beſt be dryuē
The time, & eke how freſhly we may lyuen
Whā ſhe cometh, ỳ which ſhall be right ſone
God helpe me ſo, the beſt is thus to done

Ryſe

Ryse, let vs ſpede of thys lyfe in Troye
That we haue lad, and forth the tyme dryue
And eke of tyme comyng vs reioye
That bryngen ſhal our bliſſe now ſo blyue
And langour of theſe twyſe dayes fyue
we ſhal therwyth ſo forpete or oppreſſe
That well vneth it done ſhal vs dureſſe

Thys towne is ful of lordes al aboute
And truce laſten all thys meane whyle
Go we playen vs in ſome luſty route
To Sarpedon, not hence but a myle
And thus thou ſhalt the tyme wel begyle
And dryue it forth vnto that bryght morow
That thou her ſe, that cauſe is of thy ſorow

Nowe ryſe my dere brother Troylus
For certes it non honoure is to the
To wepe, and in thy bedde to rouken thus
For trewly of o thyng truſt to me
If thou thus lygge, a daye, two or three
The folke woll wene, þ thou for cowardyſe
The fayneſt ſicke, & that thou darſt not ryſe

This Troylus anſwerde: o brother dere
Thys knowē folke that haue yſuffred paine
that though he wepe, & make ſorouful chere
That feleth harme and ſmert in euery vaine
No wonder is, and though I euer playne
Or alway wepe, I am nothyng to blame
Sens þ I haue loſte, þ cauſe of al my game

But ſens of fyne force I mote aryſe
I ſhal aryſe, as ſone as euer I may
And god, to whom myne hert I ſacrifyſe
So ſende vs haſtely the tenthe daye
For was there neuer foule ſo fayne of May
As I ſhal ben, whan þ ſhe cometh in Troye
That cauſe is of my turment and my ioye

But whyder is thy rede (q Troylus)
That we may playe vs beſte in al thys toun
By god my counſayle is (quod Pandarus)
To ryde & playe vs wyth king Sarpedoun
So longe of this they ſpeken vp and doun
Tyl Troylus gan at the laſte aſſent
To ryſe, & forth to Sarpedon they went

Thys Sarpedon, as he that honourable
was euer his lyue, and ful of bye proweſſe
wythal that myght yſerued bene on table
That deyntie was, al coſt it great rychelle
He led hem day by day, that ſuche nobleſſe
Is fayden both the moost and eke the leeſt
was neuer er that daye wyſt at any feeſt

Nor in this worlde ther is none inſtrument
Delicious, through wynd or touch or corde
As ferre as any wyght hath euer ywent
That tonge tell, or herte may recorde
But at that feeſt, it nas wel herde recorde
Ne of ladyes eke ſo fayre a compayne
On dauce er tho, was neuer ſeene with eye

But what auayleth thys to Troylus
That for his ſorowe, nothyng of it raught
But euer in one, as ſtert pytous
Ful beſily Creſeyde his lady ſought
On her was al that euer his hert thought
Now thys nowe that, ſo faſt ymaginyng
That glad ywys can him no teſtyng

Theſe ladyes eke that at thys feeſt ben
Sens that he ſawe his lady was awey
It was his ſorowe vpon hem for to ſeen
Or for to here on inſtrumentes play
For ſhe that of hys herte hath the key
was abſent, ſo thys was his fantaſye
That no wyght ſhulde make melodye

Nor there nas houre in al the day or nyght
whā he was ther as no mā myght him here
That he ne ſayd, O louefom lady bryght
Howe haue ye faren ſens that ye were there
welcome ywys myne owne lady dere
But welaway, al thus nas but a maſe
Fortune his hour, entended bet to glaſe

The letters eke, that ſhe of olde tyme
Had hym ſent, he wolde alone rede
An hundred ſythe, at warre noone and prime
Refigurying her ſhappe, & her womanhede
wythin his hert, and euery worde and dede
that paſſed was, & thus he droue to an ende
The fourth day, and ſayd he wol wende

And ſayd leue brother Pandarus
Intendeſt thou that we ſhal here bleue
Tyl Sarpedon woll forthe conueyen vs
Yet were it fayrer that we toke our leue
For goddes loue, let vs nowe ſone at eue
Our leaue take, and homwarde let vs turne
For trewly I nyl not thus ſotourne

Pandare

Pandare answerde, be we comen hyther
To fetchen fyre, and rennen home agayne
God helpe me so, I can not tellen whyther
we myght gone, yf I shall sothly sayne
There any wyght is of vs more fayne
Then Sarpedon, and yf we hence hye
Thus sodeynly I holde it bylonye

when that we sayden we wolde bleue
wyth hym a weke, and nowe thus sodaynly
The fourth daye, to take of hym our leue
Be wolde wondren on it truely
Let vs holden forth our purpose fermely
And sens that ye behyghten hym to abyde
Holde forewarde nowe, and after let vs ryde

Thys Pandarus, wyth all pyne and wo
Bade hym to dwell, and at the wekes ende
Of Sarpedon they toke her leaue tho
And on her way they spedden hem to wende
(Quod Troylus now lorde me grace sende
That I may fynde at myne home cõmynge
Creseyde comen, and therwyth gan he synge

Ye haselwode thought thys Pandare
And to hym selfe full softely he seyde
God wote refroyden may thys hotte fare
Er Calkas sende Troylus Creseyde
But natheles he taped thus and seyde
And swore ywys, hys hert him wel behyght
She wold come, as sone as euer she myght

when they vnto the palays were ycomen
Of Troylus, they downe of horse alyght
And to ỹ chãbre, her way haue they nõmen
And vnto tyme that it gan to myght
They speken of Creseyde the lady bryght
And after thys, when hem both leste
They spedde hem fro the supper vnto reste

On morowe, as sone as daye began to clere
Thys Troylus gan of hys slepe to abreyde
And to Pandarus, hys owne brother dere
For loue of god, full pytously he seyde
Is go we sene the paleys of Creseyde
For sens we yet may haue no more feest
So let vs sene her paleys at the leest

And therwythall hys meyne for to blende
A cause he fonde in towne for to go
And to Creseydes house they gone wende
But lorde thys sely Troylus was wo
Hym thought his sorowful hert brast in two
For when he sawe her doores sperred all
Wel nyg for sorowe adowne he gan to fall

Therwith whe he was ware, a gan beholde
Downe shet was euery wyndowe of the place
As frost hym thought hys herte gan to colde
For whych wyth chaunged deedly pale face
wythouten worde, he forth by gan to pace
And as god wolde, he gan so faste ryde
That no wyght of hys countenaunce aspyde

Then sayd he thus: O paleys desolate
O house of houses, whylom best yhyght
O paleys empty and dysconsolate
O thou lanterne, of whych queynt is ỹ light
O paleys, whylom daye ỹ nowe art myght
Well oughtest thou to fall, and I to dye
Sens she is went, that wont was vs to gye

O paleys, whylom crowne of houses all
Enlumyned wyth sunne of blysse
O tyrnge, of whych the rubie is out fall
O cause of wo, that cause hast ben of blysse
Yet sens I may no bet fayne wolde I hyde
Cry colde dores, durst I for thys route
And farwel shryne, of which the saynt is out

Therwyth he cast on Pandarus hys eye
wyth chaunged face, and pytous to beholde
And when he myght hys tyme aryght aspye
Aye as he rode to Pandarus he tolde
Hys newe sorowe, and eke hys loves olde
So pytously, and wyth so deed an hewe
That euery wight myght on his sorowe rewe

Fro thence forth he rydeth vp and downe
And euery thynge came hym to remẽbraunce,
As he rode forth by the places of the towne
In whych he whylom had all hys plesaunce
Lo, yonder sawe I myne owne lady daunce
And in that temple wyth her eyen clere
Me caught fyrst my ryght lady dere

And yonder haue I herde full lustely
My dere herte laugh, and yonder play
Sawe I her owones eke full blysfully
And yonder ones to me gan she saye
Nowe good swete, loue me well I praye
And yonde so goodly gan she me beholde

That to the death myne herte is to her holde

And at the corner in the yonder houſe
Herde I myne aldereſweteſt lady dere
So womanly, with voyce melodyouſe
Syngen ſo well, ſo goodly and ſo clere
That in my ſoule yet me thynketh I here
The blyſſfull ſowne, and in that yonder place
Myn lady fyrſt me toke vnto her grace

Thē thought he thus, o blyſſful lorde Cupide
when I the proceſſe haue in memorye
Howe thou me haſte wexyed on euery ſyde
Myn myght a boke make of it lyke a ſtorye
what nede is the to ſeke on me victorye
Sens I am thyne, and holy at thy wyll
what ioye haſt thou thyn owne folke to ſpyll

wel haſt thou lord ywroke on me thyn yre
Thou myghty god, and dredfull for to greue
Nowe mercy lorde, thou woſte wel I deſyre
Thy grace moſte, of all luſtes leue
And lyue and dye I woll in thy beleue
For whych I ne aſke in guerdon but a boone
That thou Creſeyde ayen me ſende ſoone

Dyſtrayne her herte as faſt to returne
As thou doeſt myne to longen her to ſe
Then wote I wel that ſhe nyll not ſoiourne
Nowe blyſſfull lorde, ſo cruell thou ne be
Vnto the bloode of Troye, I praye the
As Juno was vnto the bloode Thebane
For which ꝑ folk of Thebes caught her bane

And after thys he to the yates wente
There as Creſeyde out rode, a full good paas
And vp & downe there made he many a wēte
And to hym ſelfe full ofte he ſayd alas
Fro hence rode my blyſſe and my ſolas
As wolde blyſſfull god nowe for hys ioye
I myght her ſene ayen come to Troye

And to the yonder hyll I gan her gyde
Alas, and there I toke of her my leue
And yonde I ſawe her to her father ryde
For ſorowe of which myne herte ſhall to cleue
And hyther home I come when it was eue
And here I dwell, out caſt from al ioye
And ſhall, tyll I maye ſene her eſte in Troye

And of hym ſelfe ymagined he ofte
To ben defeyted, pale, and wexen leſſe
Then he was wont, & that men ſayden ſofte
what maye it be, who can the ſoth geſſe
why Troylus hath all thys heuyneſſe
And all thys nas but hys melancolye
That he had of hym ſelfe ſuche fantaſye

Another tyme ymagynen he wolde
That euery wyght that went by the wey
Had of hym routh, & that they ſayne ſholde
I am ryght ſory, Troylus woll dey
And thus he droue a day yet forth or tweye
As ye haue herde, ſuche lyfe gan he lede
As he that ſtode betwixen hope and drede

For whych hym lyked in hys ſonges ſhewe
Thencheſon of hys wo, as he beſt myght
And made a ſonge, of wordes but a fewe
Somwhat hys wofull herte for to lyght
And when he was from euery mānes ſyght
wyth ſofte voyce, he of hys lady dere
That abſent was, gan ſynge as ye may here

O ſterre, of whych I loſt haue al the light
wyth herte ſore, well ought I to bewayle
That euer derke in turment, nyght by nyght
Towarde my deth, vᵗ wynde I ſtere & ſayle
For whych the tenth nyght, yf that I fayle
The gydyng of thy beames bryght an houre
My ſhyp and me Caryddes woll deuoure

Thys ſonge whē he thus ſongē had ſoone
He fyll ayen into hys ſyghes olde
And euery nyght, as was his wont to doone
He ſtode the bryght moone to beholde
And all hys ſorowe he to the moone tolde
And ſayd, ywys whē thou arte horned newe
I ſhall be glad, yf all the worlde be trewe

I ſawe thyne hornes old eke by the morowe
when hence rode my ryght lady dere
That cauſe is of my turment and my ſorowe
For whych, O bryght Lucina the clere
For loue of God ren faſt aboute thy ſpere
For when thyne hornes new gynne ſpringe
Then ſhall ſhe come ꝑ may my blyſſe bringe

The daye is more, and lenger euery night
Then they ben wōte to be, hym thought tho
And that the ſonne went hys courſe vnryght
By lenger waye then it was wonte to go
And ſayd, ywys I drede me euer mo
The ſonnes ſonne Pheton be on lyue

And

And that hys fathers erecte amysse he dyde

Upon the walles fast eke he wolde he walke
And on the grekes hoste he wolde se
And to hym selfe eyght thus he wolde talke
Lo, yonder is myne owne lady free
Or els yonder, there the tentes be
And thence cometh thys ayre that is so soote
That in my soule I fele it bothe me boote

And hardly thys wynde that more & more
Thus stoundemele encreaseth in my face
Is of my ladyes depe syghes sore
I preue it thus, for in none other space
Of all thys towne, saue only in thys place
Fele I no wynde, that so woneth so ryche payne
It sayeth alas, why wepmed be we twayne

Thys lõge tyme he dryueth forth eyght thus
Tyll fully passed was the nynth nyght
And aye beside hym was thys Pandarus
That besyly dyd all hys full myght
hym to comforte, and make hys herte lyght
Purpose him hope alway þ tenth morowe
That she shal comen, & slynten al his sorowe

Upon that other syde eke was Creseyde
wyth women fewe, amonge þ grekes stroge
For whych full ofte a day, alas she syde
That I was borne, wel may myn herte lõge
After my death, for nowe lyue I to longe
Alas, and I ne maye it not amende
For nowe is wrese then euer yet I wende

My father nyll for nothynge do my grace
To gone ayen, for ought I can byseeme
And yf so be, that I my terme pace
My Troylus shall in hys herte deme
That I am false, & so it maye well seme
Thus shall I haue bothe on euery syde
That I was borne so welaway the tyde

And yf that I me put in iupardye
To steale awaye by nyght, and it befall
That I be caught, I shalbe holde a spye
Or els lo, thys drede I moste of all
yf in the hondes of some man I fall
I nam but lost, all hertely herte erthe
Nowe mighty god, thou on my sorowe rewe

Full pale ywoxen was her bryght face
Her lymmes leane, as she that all the daye
Strode when she durst, & loked on the place
There she was borne, and dwelt had aye
And all the nyght weppynge alas she laye
And thus dyspayred out of al cure
She ladde her lyfe, thys wofull creature

Full ofte a day she syghed eke for dystresse
And in her selfe she went aye purtrayeng
Of Troylus the great worthynesse
And all hys goodly wordes recordyng
Sens fyrst that day her loue bega to spryng
And thus she sette her wofull herte a fyre
Through remembraunce of þ she gan desyre

In all thys world there nys so cruel herte
That her had herde cõplaynen in her sorowe
That nold haue wepte for her paynes smert
So tenderly she wepte, both eue & morowe
Her neded no teeres for to borowe
And thys was yet the worst of all her payne
There was no wyght, to whõ she dur st playne

Full rewfully she lokedvpon Troye
Beheld the toures hygh, and eke the hallis
Alas (q she) the pleasaunce and the ioye
The whych that nowe al turned into gall is
Haue I had ofte, wythin yonder wallis
O Troylus, what doest thou nowe the syde
Lord whether thou yet thinke vpõ Creseyde

Alas, that I ne had trowed on your lore
And went wyth you, as ye me redde er thys
Then had I nowe not syghed halfe so sore
who myght haue sayd, þ I had done amys
To steale awaye wyth suche one as he is
But all to late cometh the letuary
when men the corse vnto the graue carye

To late is nowe to speke of that matere
Prudence alas, one of thyne eyen thre
She lacked alwaye, er that I came here
For on tyme passed well remembred me
And present tyme eke couthe I well se
But future tyme, er I was in the snare
Couthe I not sene, that causeth now my care

But natheles, betyde what betyde
I shall to morowe at nyght, by est or west
Out of thys hoost steale, on some syde
And gone wyth Troylus, where as hem lest
This purpose wol I holde, & this is þ best
No force of wycked tonges iaugleryе

For euer on lone, howe wrecches hab euer
wyth sterne voyce, & mighty pylmers smyte
Who is most of euery wonde take hede
Hardy, wyse, stronge, and chyualrous
Or rulen hym by euery wyghtes wyte
Of dedes ybe hys fadder Tydeus
Ne shall he neuer thyuen out of drede
And some men sayne, he was of tonge large
For that that some men blamen euer yet
And hoyse he was, of Caledony and Arge

Lo, other manet folke commenden it
Creseyde meane was of her stature
And as for me, for all suche variaunce
Thereto of shappe, of face, and eke of chere
Felicite clepe I my suffysaunce
There myght ben no fayrer creature
And eke tyme thys was her maneere
For wheych, wythout any wordes mo
To gone ytrelled wyth her heeres clere
To Troy I wend, as for conclusioun
Downe by her colere, at her backe behynde
But God it wote, er fully monethes two
Which with a tyssede of golde she wold bynde
She was full ferre fro that entencioun
And tyme her hadwes lowneden yfere
For both Troylus and Troyetoun
There nas no lacke, in aught I can aspyen
Shall knotlesse thoughout her herte hyde
But for to speken of her eyen clere
For she wold take a purpose for to abyde
Lo, trewly they wytten that her seyen
That paradys stode formed in her eyen
Thys Diomede, of whome yow tell I can
And wyth her eyghe bewte ententyue
Goeth nowe wythin hym selfe aye arguyng
Stroue loue in her, ay which of hē was more
wyth all the sleyght and all that euer he can
Howe he maye best wyth shortest taryeng
She sobre was eke, symple, & wyse withal
In to hys nette Creseydes herte bringe
The beste ynorysshed eke that myght be
To thys entente he couth neuer fyne
And goodly of her speche in generall
To sythen her, he layde out hoke and lyne
Charitable, estately, lusty, and free
Ne neuer more ne lasted her pyte
But natheless, well in hys herte he thought
Tendre hearted, slydynge of corage
That she nas not wythout a loue in Troye
But truely I can not tell her age
For neuertythen he her thens brought
Ne couth he serue her laugh, or make toye
And Troylus well worthy was in byght
He myst howe best her herte for cacoye
And complete fetured by proporcioun
But for to sayne, he sayd naught it ne greueth
Ho wel, that bynde it naught amenden myght
For he that naught assayeth naught atcheueth
Yonge, freshe, stronge, and hardy as lyoun
Trewe as steele, in eche condicioun
Yet sayd he to hym selfe vpon a nyght
One of the beste entreched creature
Nowe am I not a fole, that wote wel howe
That is or shal, whyle ỳ the worlde may dure
Her wo is, for loue of another wyght
And her vpon to gon assaye her nowe
And certaynly, in sharp as I it fonde
I maye well werte, it wyll not den my prowe
That Troylus was neuer wrete no wyght
For wyse folke in bokes it expresse
As in hys tyme, in no degre dissonde
Men shall not wowe a wyght in hevynesse
In daryinge do, that longeth to a knyght
But who so myght wynnen suche a floure
All myght a gentyl passion hym of myght
Fro hym, for who she mourneth night & daye
Hys herte aye wyth the fyrst and wyth ỳ best
He myght sayne he were a conqueroure
Stode perrygall to dare dons what hym lyste
And ryght anone, as he that bolde was aye
Thought in his hert, happe howe happe may
But for to tellen forth of Diomede
All shulde I dye, I woll her herte fynde
It fyll, that after on the tenthe daye
I shall no more lien but my spedye
Syns that Creseyde out of the cyte yede
Thys Diomede, as fresh as braunche in May
Thys Diomede, as bokes hym declare
Came to the tente there as Calkas lay
Was in hys nedes prest and corageous
And feyned hym to Calcas haue to doone

But

But what he mente, I shal you tellen soone

Creseyde at shorte wordes for to tell
welcomed hym, & downe hym by her sette
And he was eth ynough to maken dwell
And after thys, wythouten longe lette
The spyces and the wyne mē forth hem fette
And forth they spake of thys and that yfere
As frendes done, of whych some shal ye here

Tho gan first fallen of the werre in speche
Betwixen hem & the folke of Troye toun
And of thassiege he gan eke her beseche
To tellen hym what was her opinioun
Fro that demaunde he so dyscendeth doun
To asken her, yf that her straunge thought
The grekes gyse, & werkes ỳ they wrought.

And why her father tarryeth so longe
To wedden her vnto some worthy wyght
Creseyde that was in her parnes stronge
For loue of Troylus her owne knyght
So ferforth as she coulynge had or myght
Answerde hym tho, but as of hys entente
It semed not she wyste what he mente

But natheless thys ylke Diomede
Can on hym selfe allure, and thus he seyde
Yf I aryght haue taken on you hede
Me thynketh thus, o lady myne Creseyde
That sens I fyrst bōde on your bryde leyde
when ye out came of Troye by the morowe
Ne myght I neuer sene you but in sorowe

I can not sayne what may the cause be
But yf for loue of some Troyan it were
The whych ryght sore wolde athynken me
That ye for any wyght that dwelleth there
Shulden spyll a quarter of a teere
Or pytously your selfen so begyle
For dredelesse it is not worth the whyle

The folke of Troye, as who sayth al & some
In person ben, as ye your selfen se
Fro thence shall not one on lyue come
For all the golde atwyxen sunne and see
Trusteth well, and vnderstandeth me
There shall not one to mercy gone on lyue
All were he lorde of worldes twyse lyue

Such wrech on hem for fetchyng of Helevne
There shall be take, er that we hence wende
That Maumes, which ỳ goddes bē of peyne
Shal ben agast that grekes wol hem shende
And men shall drede vnto the worldes ende
From hence forth, to rauyshen any quene
So cruell shall our wreche on hem be sene

And but yf Calcas lede vs wyth ambages
That is to sayne, wyth double wordes slye
Such as mē clepen a worde wh two visages
Ye shall well knowen that I not ne lye
And all thys thinge ryght sene it wh your eye
And ỳ anone, ye nyll not trowe howe soone
Nowe taketh hede, for it is for to doone

what wene ye your wyse father wolde
Haue yeuen Antenor for you anone
yf he ne wyst that the cytie shulde
Dystroyed ben- why nay so mote I gone
He knewe full well there shal not scapen one
That Troyan is, and for the great feere
He durst not that ye dwelte lenger there

what woll ye more, o louesom lady dere
Let Troye and troyans fro your herte pace
Dryue out ỳ bytter hope, & make good chere
And clepe ayen the beaute of your face
That ye wyth salte teeres so deface
For Troye is brought in suche a ieopardye
That it to saue is nowe no remedye

And thynketh wel, ye shal in grekes fynde
A more partyte loue, er it be nyght
Then any troyan is, and more kynde
And bet to seruen you woll done hys myght
And yf ye vouchsafe my lady bryght
I woll ben he, to seruen you my selue
Yea leauer then be lorde of Greces twelue

And wyth ỳ worde he gan to waxen reed
And in hys speche, a lytel whyle he quoke
And cast asyde a lytell wyth hys heed
And stynte a whyle, & aftermarde he woke
And sobrely on her he threwe hys loke
And sayd I am, al be it to you no ioye
As gentyll a man, as any wyght in Troye

For yf my father Tydeus, he seyde
Alyued had, I had ben er thys
Of Calcidony and Arge a kynge Creseyde
And so hope I that I shalbe ywys
But he was slayne alas, the more harme is
Unhappely at Thebes all to rathe

Polymyte, and many a man to ſcathe

But herte myne, ſythe that I am your mã
And ben the fyſt, of whome I ſeche grace
To ſerue you as hertely as I can
And euer ſhall whyle I to lyue haue ſpace
So that, er I departe out of thys place
Ye woll me graunt that I maye to morowe
At better leyſer tell you of my ſorowe

what ſhulde I tell hys wordes ꝑ he ſeyde
He ſpake ynough for o daye at the meſt
It preueth well he ſpake ſo, that Creſeyde
Graunted on the morowe at hys requeſt
For to ſpeake wyth hym at the leeſt
So that he nolde ſpeake of ſuche matere
And thus ſhe to hym ſayd, as ye mowe here

As ſhe that had her herte on Troylus
So faſt, that there maye it none arace
And ſtraungely ſhe ſpake, and ſayd thus
O Diomede, I loue that ylke place
There I was borne, & loues for thy grace
Delyuer it ſoone of all that doth it care
God for thy myght ſo leue it well to fare

That grekes wold her wrath on Troy wreke
Yf that they myght I knowe it wel ywys
But it ſhall naught befallen as ye ſpeke
And god to forne, and farther ouer thys
I wote my father wyſe and redy is
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde
So dere I am the more vnto hym holde

That Grekes ben of hygh condition
I wote eke wel, but certayne men ſhal fynde
As worthy folke wythin Troy toun
As conning, as parfyte, and as kynde
As ben betwyxte Orcades and Inde
And that ye conde well your lady ſerue
I trowe eke well, her thanke for to deſerue

But as to ſpeke of loue, ywys ſhe ſeyde
I had a lorde, to whome I wedded was
The whoſe myne herte was all tyll he deyde
And other loue, as helpe me nowe Pallas
There in myne herte nys, ne neuer was
And that ye ben of noble and hygh kynrede
I haue well herde it tellen out of drede

And that doth me to haue ſo great a wonder
That ye woll ſcorne any woman ſo
Eke god wote, loue and I ben fer aſonder
I am diſpoſed bet ſo mote I go
Vnto my death playne and make wo
what I ſhall after done, I can not ſay
But trewly as yet me lyſt not play

Myne herte is nowe in tribulatioun
And ye in armes beſy daye by daye
Herafter when ye wonnen haue the toun
Perauenture then, ſo it happen may
That when I ſe that I neuer ere ſay
Then woll I werke ꝑ I neuer ere wrought
Thys worde to you ynoughe ſuffyſen ought

To morow eke wol I ſpeke wyth you fayne
So that ye touchen naught of thys matere
And when you lyſt, ye may come here agayne
And er ye gone, thus moche I ſaye you here
As helpe me Pallas, wyth her herres clere
Yf that I ſhulde of any greke haue routhe
It ſhulde be your ſeluen by my trouthe

I ſaye not therfore that I wol you loue
Ne ſay not nay, but in concluſioun
I meane well by god that ſyt aboue
And therwythall ſhe caſte her eyen doun
And gã to ſigh & ſaid, Troilus & Troy toun
Yet bydde I god, in quyete and in reſte
I maye you ſene, or do myne herte breſte

But in effecte, and ſhortly for to ſaye
Thys Diomede all freſhly newe agayne
Gan preaſen on, and faſte her mercy praye
And after thys the ſoth for to ſayne
Her gloue he toke, of which he was ful fayne
And fynally, when it was worn eue
And all was well, he roſe and toke hys leue

The bryght Venus folowed & aye taught
The way there brode Phebus downe alight
And Cythera her chare horſe ouer raught
To whyle out of the lyon, yf ſhe myght
And Hygniter hys candels ſheweth bryght
when that Creſeyde vnto her bedde wente
wythin her fathers fayre bryght tente

Retourning in her ſoule aye vp & downe
The wordes of thys ſodayne Diomede
Hys great eſtate, and peryl of the towne
And that ſhe was alone, and had nede
Of frendes helpe, and thus be gan to brede
The cauſe why the ſoth for to tell

She toke fully purpose for to dwell

The morow came, and goostly for to speke
This Diomede is come vnto Cresseyde
And shortly, lesse that ye my tale breke
So wel he for hym selfe spake and seyde
That all her sythes sore, downe he leyde
And fynally, the sothe for to sayne
He lefte her the great of all her payne

And after this, the storye telleth vs
That she him yaue the fayre baye stede
The whiche she ones wan of Troylus
And eke a broche (and that was lytel nede)
That Troylus was, she yaue this Diomede
And eke the bet from sorowe him to releue
She made him weare a peuell of her sleue

I fynde eke in stories els where
whan through the body hurte was Diomede
Of Troylus, tho wepte she many a teere
whā that she sawe his wyde woundes blede
And that she toke to kepen him good hede
And for to healen him of his smerte
Wen sayn, I not, that she yaue him her herte

But trewly the storie telleth vs
There made neuer woman more wo
Than she, whan that she falsed Troylus
She sayd alas, for nowe is clene ago
My name in trouthe of loue for euermo
For I haue falsed one the gentylleſt
That euer was, and one the worthyeſt

Alas, of me vnto the worldes ende
Shal neyther ben ywritten nor ysonge
No good word, for these bokes wol me shende
Ireled shall I ben on many a tonge
Throughout ỹ worlde, my bel shal be ronge
And women moste wol hate me of all
Alas, that suche a caas me shulde fall

They wol sayne, in as moche as in me is
I haue hem done dishonour welaway
Alde I nat the fyrst that dyd amys
what helpeth that, to don my blame away
But sens I se there is no better way
And that to late is nowe for me to rewe
To Diomede I woll algate be trewe

But Troylus, sens I no better may
And sens that thus departen ye and I
Yet pray I god so yeue you right good day
As for the gentylleſt knyght trewly
That euer I sawe, to seruen faythfully
And best can aye his ladyes honour kepe
And with ỹ worde she braste anone to wepe

And certes you ne haten shall I neuer
And frendes loue, that shal ye haue of me
And my good worde, all shulde I lyuen euer
And trewly I wolde right sore be
For to sene you in aduersyte
And gyltleſſe I wote wel I you leue
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leue

But trewly howe longe it was betweene
That she forsoke him for this Diomede
There is none auctour telleth it I weene
Take euery man nowe to his bokes hede
He shall no terme fynden, out of drede
For though that he began to wowe her soone
Er he her wan, yet was there more to done

Ne me ne lyste this sely woman chyde
Further than the storie woll deuyse
Her name alas, is publyshed so wyde
That for her gylte it ought ynough suffyse
And yf I might excuse her in any wyse
For she so sory was for her vntrouthe
I wys I wolde excuse her yet for routhe

This Troylus, as I before haue tolde
Thus driueth forth, as wel as he hath might
But ofte was his herte hote and colde
And namely that ylke nynthe nyght
whiche on the morowe she had him behyght
To come ayen, god wote ful lytel reste
Had he that night, nothyng to slepe him beste

The laurer crowned Phebus, with his heate
Gan in his course aye vpwarde as he wente
To warmen of the est see the waues weate
And Cyrres doughter songe, with freshe entet
whan Troylus his Pandare after sente
And on the walles of the towne they pleyde
To loke, yf they can sene aught of Cresseyde

Tyll it was noone, they stoden for to se
who that ther came, and euery maner wight
That came fro ferre, they sayden it was she
Tyll that they colden knowen him aright
Nowe was his herte dull, now was it light
And thus betraped stoden for to stare

Thoute naught,this Troylus ⁊ Pandare

To Pandarus,this Troylus tho seyde
For aught I wotte,before noone sykerly
In to thistown ne cometh nat here Creseyde
She hath ynough to done hardely
To wynnen from her father,so trowe I
Her olde father wol yet make her dyne
Er that she go,god yeue his herte pyne

Pãdarus answerd,it may well ben certayne
And for thy let vs dyne,I the beseche
And after noon,thã mayst thou come agayn
And whom they go,without more speche
And comen ayen,but longe may they seche
Er that they fynde that they after gape
Fortune hem bothe thynketh for to rape

(Quod Troylus) I se well nowe that she
Is tarved with her olde father so
That er she come it woll nygh euen be
Come forthe,I woll vnto the yate go
These porters ben vnkonnyng euermo
And I woll done hem holden vp the yate
As naught ne were,all though she come late

The day gothe faste,⁊ after that came eue
And yet came nat to Troylus Creseyde
He loketh forthe by hedge,by tree,by greue
And ferre his heed ouer the wall he leyde
And at the laste he turned him,and seyde
By god I wote her meanyng now Pandare
Almoste yuis al newe was my care

Nowe douteleesse this lady can her goode
I wote she cometh rydyng prively
I commende her wysedom by myne hode
She woll nat maken people nycely
Gaure on her whan ỳ she cometh,but softly
By nyght in to the town she thynketh ryde
And dere brother thynke nat longe to abyde

We haue naught els for to don yuis
And Pandarus,now wylte thou trowen me
Haue here my trouthe I se her,yonde she is
Beaue vp thyne eyen man,mayst thou nat se
Pandare answerde,nay so mote I the
Al wrõg by god,what sayst ỳ mã wher arte
That I se yonde,nys but a farre carte

Alas,thou sayest right sothe (ỳ Troylus)
But hardely it is nat al for nought
That in myne herte I nowe reioyce thus
It is ayenst some good,I haue a thought
Not I nat howe,but sens ỳ I was wrought
Ne felte I suche a comfort dare I say
She cometh to night,my lyfe ỳ durst I lay

Pãdarus answerd,it may be wel ynough
And helde with him,of al that euer he sayde
But in his herte he thought,and softe lough
And to him selfe full soberly he sayde
Fro me hasel wodde,there ioly Robyn pleyde
Shall come all that thou abydest here
Yea,farwell all the snowe of ferne yere

The wardeyn of the yates gan to call
The folke,which that without ỳ yates were
And bade hem dauen in her beestes all
Or all the night they muste bleuen there
And ferre within the night,with many a tere
This Troylus gan homwarde for to ryde
For wel he seeth it helpeth nat to abyde

But natheleesse he gladded him in this
He thought he myscounted had his dey
And sayd,I vnderstonde haue al amys
For thylke night I lafte Creseyde sey
She sayd,I shall ben here,yf that I may
Er that the moone,o dere herte swete
The Lyon palle,out of this Aryete

For which she may yet hold al her byheste
And on the morowe,vnto the yate he wente
And vp and downe,by west ⁊ eke by este
Vpon the walles made he many a wente
But al for naught,his hope al way him blente
For whiche at night,in sorowe ⁊ syghes sore
He wente hym home,without en any more

This hope all clene out of his herte fledde
He ne hath wheron nowe longer for to honge
But for ỳ payne him thought his herte bledde
So were his throwes sharpe,⁊ wonder strõg
For whan he sawe that she abode so longe
He wyste what he iudgen of it myght
Sens she hath broken that she him behyght

The thyrde,fourthe,fyfthe,and sexte day
After tho dayes ten,of whiche I tolde
Bet wyxen hope and dredc his herte lay
Yet somwhat trustyng on her bestes olde
But whan he sawe she nolde her terme holde
He can nowe sene none other remedye

But for

But for to shape him sone for to dye

Therwith the wicked spirye, god vs bleſſe
which that men clepen woode Ialousye
Gan in him crepe, in al this heuynesse
For whyche bycause he wolde sone dye
He ne ete ne dronke for hys melancolye
And eke from euery companye he fledde
This was the lyfe that al this tyme he ledde

He so defayte was, that no maner man
Vnneth him might knowen there he wente
So was he leane, and therto pale and wan
And feble, that he walketh by potente
And with his ire he thus him selfe shente
But who so asked him wherof hym smerte
He sayd, his harme was al aboute his herte

Priam full ofte, and eke his mother dere
His bretherne & his sustren gan him frayne
why he so sorowfull was in all his chere
And what thyng was ꝑ cause of al his payne
But al for naught, he nolde hys cause playne
But sayd, he felte a greuous maladye
Aboute his herte, and sayne he wolde dye

So on a day he laye him downe to slepe
And so byfell that in slepe him thought
That in a forest faste he walked to wepe
For loue of her, ꝑ him these paynes wrought
And vp and downe, as he that forest sought
He mette he sawe a bore, with tuskes greate
That slept ayenst the bright sonnes heate

And by this bore, faste in her armes folde
Lay kyssyng aye his lady bright Creseyde
For sorow of which, whan he it gan beholde
And for dispyte, out of his slepe he breyde
And loude he cryed on Pandarus, and seyde
O Pandarus nowe knowe I croppe & roote
I nam but deed, there nys non other boote

My lady bright Creseyde hath me betrayde
In whom I trusted moste of any wight
She els where hath nowe her herte apayde
The blysful goddes, through her gret might
Haue in my dreame ywhewed it full right
Thus in my dreme, Creseyde haue I beheld
And all this thyng to Pandarus he tolde

O my Creseyde alas, what subtylte
what newe lust, what beaute, what science,
what wyathe of iuste cause haue ye to me
what gylte of me, what fel experience
Hath me raste alas, thyne aduertence
O trust, o fayethe, o depe assurance
who hath me raste Creseyde, all my plesance

Alas, why let I you from hence go
For which wel nigh out of my wyt I breyde
who shall nowe trowe on any othes mo
God wote I wende, o lady bright Creseyde
That euery worde was gospel that ye seyde
But who may her begyle, yf hym lyste
Than he on whom men wenen best to tryste

What shall I done, my Pandarus alas
I fele nowe so sharpe a newe payne
Sens that there is no remedye in this caas
That her were it, I with myn hôdes twayn
Wy selue slowe, than alway thus to playn
For though ꝑ deth my wo shuld haue an end
Yet euery day with lyfe my selfe I shende

Pandare answerde & sayd, alas the whyle
That I was boune, haue I nat sayd er thys
That dreames many a maner man begyle
And why for folke expounden hem amys
Howe darste thou sayne that falle thy lady is
For any dreame, right for thyn owne drede
Let be this thought, ꝑ canst no dremes rede

Paraduenture there thou dreamest of this bore
It may so be that it may signifye
Her father, whyche that olde is and eke hore
Ayen the sonne lythe on poynte to dye
And she for sorowe gynneth wepe and crye
And kylleth him, there he lythe on ꝑ grounde
Thus shuldest ꝑ thy dreme aright expounde

Howe might I than done (q Troylus)
To knowe of this, yea were it neuer so lyte
Now sayest thou wisely (q this Pandarus)
Wyerde is this, sens thou canst wel endyte
That hastely a letter thou her wryte
Through which ꝑ shalt wel bringen about
To knowe a sothe, of that thou arte in doute

And se nowe why for this I dare wel sayne
That yf so is, that she vntrewe be
I can nat trowen that she wol write ageyns
And yf she write, thou shalt ful sone yse
As whether she hath any lyberte
To come ayen, or els in some skawse

If she

If she be let, she will allygne a mene

Thou hast nat writte to her sens ꝑ she went
Nor she to the, and this I durste lay
There may suche cause ben in her entente
That hardely thou wolt thy selven say
That her abode the best is for you tway
Nowe write her than, & thou shalt sele sone
A sothe of all, there is no more to done

Accorded ben to this conclusyoun
And that anon, these yike lordes two
Withdrawen ben, Troylus adoun
And rolleth in his herte to and fro
Howe he may best discryuen her his wo
And to Creseyde his owne lady dere
He wrote right thus, & sayd as ye may here.

The copy of the letter.



Right freshe flowre, whose I haue ben and shall
Withoute parte of elis where seruyce
Weyth herte, body, lyfe, lust, thought, and all
I wofull wight in euery humble wyse
That tonge can tel, or herte may deuyse
As ofte as matter occupyeth place
Me recommaunde vnto your noble grace

Lyketh it you to weten swete herte
As ye wel knowe, howe longe tyme agon
That ye me left in aspre paynes smerte
Whan that ye went, of whyche yet bote non
Haue I non had, but euer wexe bygon
Fro day to day am I, and so there dwell
Whyle it you lyst, of wele and wo my well

For which to you, with dredeful hert entyre
Complayne my cas as I dare, or can endyte
Besechyng you, that many ye wyte
The lenger, which that fro myne eyen tayne
That wolden speke, yf ꝑ they durste & playne
You fyrst therfore I, that your eyen clere
And eke myn eres, that ye may lasty here
Wol vouchesafe thyse lettres to beholde
And of the cause of my comyng vnbolde

That fleeth my wyt, yf aught anysome stode
Forgeue it me, myne owne swete herte

If any seruaunt durst or ought of ryght
Vpon his lady pitously complayne
Than wene I that I ought be that wyght
Consydred this, that ye these monthes twayn
Haue tarryed, there ye sayden sothe to sayn
But ten dayes ye nolde in hoste sojourne
But in two monthes, yet ye nat retourne

But for as moche, as me mote nedes lyke
All that you lyst, I dare nat playne more
But humbly, with sorowfull syghes syke
You write I myne vnresty sorowes sore
Fro day to day, desyryng euer more
To knowen fully, yf your wyll it were
Howe ye haue fared & don while ye be there

Whose welfare and heale the god encrease
In honour suche, that vpwarde in degree
It growe alway, so that it neuer cease
Right as your herte aye can my lady free
Deuyse, I pray to god so mote it be
And graunt it that ye soone vpon me rewe
As wisely as in all I am to you trewe

And yf you lyketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whose wo ther may no wyt discryue
I can no more, but chest of euery care
At writyng of this letter I was on lyue
Al redy out my wofull goost to dryue
Whiche I delay, and holde him yet in honde
Vpon the syght of matter of your sonde

Myne eyen two in hayn, with which I se
Of sorowfull teares salte arn worden welles
Myn longe an playnt of myne aduersyte
Myn good in harm, myn ease the more hell is
Myn ioye in wo, I can sey nowe nought ellis
But turned is for whiche my lyfe I wary
Euery ioye prease in this contrary

Which eth your comyng home aye to Troy
Ye may redresse, and more a thousande syth
Than euer I had encressen in me ioy
For was there neuer herte yet so blythe
To haue his lyfe, as I shall ben as swythe
As I you se, and though no maner touche
Can meuen you, yet thinketh on your trouthe

And yf so be my gyltes hath be the deserued

Or yf

Or yf you lyſt no more vpon me ſe
In guerdon yet of that I haue you ſerued
Beſeche I you, myn owne lady fre
That her vpon ye wolden wryte me
For loue of god, my right lode ſterre
That deth may make an ende of al my werre

If other cauſe aught doth you for to dwel
That with your letter ye may me recomforte
For though to me your abſence is an hell
Wyth patience I woll my wo comforte
And with your lettre of hope I wol diſporte
Now wryteth ſwete, & let me thus nat playn
Wyth hope or dethe, delyureth me fro payne

Iwys myne owne dere herte trewe
I wote that whan ye nerr vpon me ſe
So loſte haue I myn heale, & eke myn hewe
Creſeyde ſhall nat conne knowen me
Iwys myne hertes day, my lady fre
So thurſteth aye myne herte to beholde
Your beaute, that vnneth my lyfe I holde

I ſay no more, all haue I for to ſey
To you wel more than I tell may
But whether that ye do me lyue or dey
Yet pray I god, ſo yeue you right good day
And farewel wel goodly fayre freſh may
As ye that lyfe or dethe me may commaunde
And to youre trouthe aye I me recōmaunde

Wyth heale ſuche, that but ye yeuen me
The ſame heale, I ſhal none heale haue
In you lythe, whan you lyſt that it ſo be
The day in which me clothen ſhal my graue
And in you my lyfe, in you might for to ſaue
Be fro diſeaſe of all paynes ſmerte
And fare nowe well myne owne ſwete herte

Le voſtre T.

This lettre forth was ſent vnto Creſeyde
Of whiche her anſwere in affecte was thys
Full pitouſly ſhe wrote ayen, and ſeyde
That alſo ſone as ſhe myght ywis
She wold come, & mende al that was amys
And fynally ſhe wrote and ſayd then
She wolde come, ye, but ſhe nyſte when

But in her letter made ſhe ſuche feeſtes
That wōder was, & ſwore ſhe loued him beſt
Of which he founde but botomleſſe byheſtes
But Troylus thou mayſt nowe eeſt & weſt
Pype in an Ivy leefe yf that the leſt
Thus gothe the worlde, god ſhylde vs fro miſchaunce
And euery wight that meneth trouth auaūce

Encreaſen gan the wo fro day to nyght
Of Troylus, for taryeng of Creſeyde
And leſſen gan his hope and eke his myght
For which al down he in his bedde him leyd
He ne ete, dronke, ne ſlept, ne worde ſeyde
Imagynyng aye that ſhe was vnkynde
For which wel nigh he wert out of his mind

This dreme, of which I told haue eke beforn
May neuer come out of his remembraunce
He thought aye well, he had his lady loyne
And that Ioues, of hys puruevaunce
Hym ſhewed had in ſlepe the ſignyfiaunce
Of her vntrouth, and his diſauenture
And that the bore was ſhewed him in figure

For whiche he for Sybille his ſuſter ſente
That called was Caſſandre eke all aboute
And all his dreame he tolde her er he ſtente
And her beſought alſoylen him the doute
Of the ſtronge boore, with tuſkes ſtoute
And fynally, within a lytell ſtounde
Caſſandre him gan thus hys dreme expoūde

She gan firſt ſmyle, & ſayd o brother dere
If thou a ſoth of this deſyreſt to knowe
Thou muſte a fewe of olde ſtories here
To purpoſe howe that fortune ouerthrowe
Hath lordes old, through which vnto a throwe
Thou ſhalt this bore know, & of what kynde
He comen is, as men in bookes fynde

Diane, which that wroth was and in yre
For grekes nolde done her ſacrifyce
Ne encens vpon her aulter ſette on fyre
She for that grekes gonne her ſo diſpyſe
Wrake hereon a wonder cruel wyſe
For with a bore, as great as ore in ſtall
She made vp frete her corne and vynes all

To ſlee the bore was al ỹ countrey reyſed
Amonge whiche there came this bore to ſe
A mayd, one of this worlde the beſt ypraiſed
And Meleager, lorde of that countre
He loued ſo this freſhe mayden fre
That with his manhode, er he wolde ſtente
This bore he ſlough, and her ỹ heed he ſente

Of whiche

Of whiche, as olde bokes tellen vs
There rose a contek and a great enuye
And of this lorde dissended Tideus
By lygne of eis olde bokes lye
But howe this Meleager gan to dye
Through his mother, wolt I you nat tell
For all to longe it were for to dwell

She tolde eke howe Tideus, er he lente
Unto the stronge cyte of Thebes
(To claymen kyngdom of the cyte) went
For his felawe dan Polimites
Of whiche the brother dan Ethiocles
Ful wrongfully of Thebes helde þ strentgh
This tolde she by processe all by lengthe

She tolde eke howe Hemonydes asserte
Whan Tydeus slough fyfty knightes stoute
She tolde eke all the prophesies by herte
And howe that seuen kynges with her route
Besiegeden the cyte all aboute
And of the holy serpent, and the well
And of the furyes al she gan hym tell

Affuit at profugum, Tydeus primo Polimidem
Cædea legatum docet infidiasq; secundis
Tydeus Hemodicn canit et bates latitantes
Bisq; furit, Lernæ quinto narrantur et anguis
Sextus habet regis incunctes pœna septem
Archemon busium, ferro Indigi feguntur
Post Graios Thebas bellum septimus ambit
Hippomedon, cecidit Tydeus ipse vir a pelagis
Fœmineis nono mœstus, cum Parthonopeo
Fulminat pectulo, decimo Capaneus superatus
Undecimo fere perimunt per vulnera fratres
Regnum sextum, narrant duodecim et ignem.

Of Archimores buryeng, and the plawes
And how Amphiorax fell through þ grounde
Howe Tideus was slayne, lorde of Argeues
And howe Hypomedon in a lytell stounde
Was dreynte, and deed Parthonope of wounde
And also howe Campaneus the proude
With thoder dynte was slayne, þ cryed loude

He gan eke tel him how that eyther brother
Ethiocles and Polimites also
At a scarmythe, eche of hem slough other
And of Argyues wepyng and her mo
And how þ town was brent she told eke tho
And tho dissended downe from testes olde
To Diomede, and thus she spake and tolde

This yike boke betokeneth Diomede
Tideus sonne, that downe dissended is
Fro Meleager, that made the boke to blede
And thy lady, where so she be ywis
This Diomede her herte hath, and she hys
Wepe yf thou wolte or leaue, for out of doute
This Diomede is in, and thou arte oute

Thou sayest nat soth (q he) thou sorceresse
With all thy false gosse of prophecie
Thou wenest ben a great deuineresse
Nowe seest thou nat this foole of fantasye
Paynen her on ladyes for to lye
I way (q he) there Joues yeue the sorowe
Thou shalt be fals paraucture yet to morowe

As wel thou mightest lyen on good Alceste
That was of creatures (but men lye)
That euer weren, kyndest and the beste
For whan her husbonde was in ieopardye
To dye him selfe, but yf she wolde dye
She chese for him to dye, and gon to hell
And starfe anon, as vs the bokes tell

Cassandre gothe, and he with cruell herte
Forwate his wo for angre of her speche
And from his bedde all sodaynly he sterte
As though al hole hym had ymade a leche
And day by day he gan enquire and seche
A sothe of this, with all hys full cure
And thus he diuerteth forth his auenture

Fortune, whiche that permutacion
Of thynges hath, as it is her committed
Through purueyaunce and disposicion
Of hygh Joue, as resgnes shall ben flytted
Fro folke to folk, or whã they shal ben smytted
Gan pull away the fethers bright of Troye
Fro day to day, tyl they ben bare of ioye

Amonge all this, the fyne of the ieopardy
Of Hector gan approchen wonder blyue
The fate wolde his soule shulde vnbodye
And shapen had a meane it out to dryue
Ayenst whych fate him helpeth nat to stryue
But on a day to fyghten gan he wende
At whiche alas, he caught his lyues ende

For which me thynketh euery maner wyght
That haunteth armes, ought to be wayle
The dethe of him that was so noble a knight
For as he drough a kyng by thauentayle
Unware of this, Achilles through the mayle
And through the body gan hym for to ryue
And thus þ worthy knight was reste of lyue

For whom as olde bookes tellen vs
was made

was made such wo, ꝑ tonge it may not tell
And namely the sorowe of Troylus
That nerr him was of worthynesse the wel
And in this wo gan Troylus to dwell
That what for sorow, loue, and for vnreste
Ful ofte a daye he bade his herte breste

But nathelesse, though he gan him dispayre
And dredde aye that his lady was vntrewe
yet aye on her his herte gan repayre
and as these louers don, he sought aye new
To gret ayen Cresseyde bryght of hewe
And in his hert he went her excusyng
That Calcas caused al her taryeng

And ofte time he was in purpose greate
Him seluen lyke a pylgrym to disgyse
To seme her, but he may not counterfeate
To ben vnknowen of folke that weren wise
Ne fynde excuse aryght that may suffyse
If he amonge the grekes knowen were
For which he weyte ful ofte many a teere

There he wrote yet ofte tyme al newe
ful pytously, he lefte it not for slouth
Beseching her, sens that he was trewe
that she wol come ayen & holde her trouth
For which Cresseyde vpon a day for routh
I take it so, touchynge al thys matere
wrote him ayen, and sayd as ye may here

Cupides sonne, ensample of godlyhede
O swerde of knyghthode, sours of gentilnesse
How myght awight in turment & in drede
And healelesse you sende, as yet gladnesse
I hertelesse, I sycke, I in distresse
Sens ye vh me, nor I wyth you may deale
You neyther sende I herte may nor heale

Your letters ful the paper al vplaynted
Conceyued hath myne hertes pyte
I haue eke sene wyth teares al depaynted
Your letter, and howe that ye requyren me
To come ayen, which yet ne may nat be
But why, lesse that this letter soúden were
No mencion ne make I nowe for feere

Greuous to me (god wote) is your vnrest
Your haste, and that the goddes ordinaunce
It semeth not ye take it for the beste
Nor other thyng nys in your remembraúce
As thynketh me, but onely your plesaunce
But beth nat wroth, and that I you beseche
For that I tary is al for wycked speche

For I haue herde wel more than I wende
touchyng vs two, how thinges haue ystóde
whych I shal wyth dissimulyng amende
and beth not wroth I haue eke vnderstonde
Howe ye ne do but holden me in honde
But now no force, I can not in you gesse
But al trouth and al gentylnesse

Come I wol, but yet in such disioynte
I stóde as nowe, ꝑ what yere, or what daye
That this shal be, that can I not apoynte
But in effecte I pray you as I maye
of your good worde, & of your frendshup aye
For trewely whyle that my lyfe may dure
As for a frende ye may in me assure

Yet praye I you on yuel ye ne take
That it is shorte, whych that I to you wryte
I dare not there I am wel letters make
Ne neuer yet ne couthe I wel endyte
Ne great effecte men wryte in place lyte
The entent is al, and not the leteres space
And farewel wel, god haue you in hys grace

L a voltre C.

This Troylus thought this letter al straunge
whan he it sawe, and sorowfully he syght
Him thought it lyke a kalendes of eschaunge
But finally he fully trowen myght
That she ne wolde him holde that she hight
For with ful yuel wyl I wyll hym to leue
ꝑ loueth well in such case though him greue

But nathelesse, men sayne that at the laste
For any thynge, men shal the soth se
And suche a case betydde, and that as faste
That Troylus wel vnderstode that she
Was nat so kynde, as that her ought be
And finally he wote nowe out of doute
That al is lost, that he hath ben aboute

Stode on a day in hys melancolye
Thys Troylus, and in suspectioun
Of her, for whom he wende to dye
And so befyl, that throughout Troy toun
As was the gyse, yborne was vp and doun
I manere cote armure, as sayth the storye
Before Dyphebe, in signe of his victorye

The whyche cote, as telleth Lollius

Dyomede it had rent fro Dyomede
The same daye and whan thys Troylus
Ist sawe, he gan to taken of it hede
Enuyeng al the length and of the bredе
And al the werke, but as he gan beholde
Ful sodeynly hys herte gan to colde

As he that on the coler londe wythin
A broche, that he Creseyde yaue at morowe
That she from Troye must nedes twyn
In remembraunce of hym, and of his sorowe
And she him sayde ayen her fayth to borowe
To kepe it aye, but nowe full wel he wyst
Hys lady nas no lenger on to tryst

He goth hym home, and gan ful sone sende
For Pandarus, and al thys newe chaunce
and of this broch he tolde him worde & ende
Complaynyng of her hertes variaunce
His longe loue, hys trouth, and his penaūce
And after deth, without wordes more
Ful faste he cryed, his reste hym to restore

Than spake he thus, O lady mine Creseyde
wher is your fayth, & where is your behest
where is your loue, where is your trouth he
of Dyomede haue ye now al this feest (seyd
Alas, I wolde haue trowed at the leest
That sens ye nolde in trouth to me stonde
That ye thus nolde haue holden me in hōde

who shal nowe trowen on any othes more
Alas I neuer wolde haue wende er thys
That ye Creseide couldе haue chaunched so
Ne but I had agylte, and done amys
So cruel wende I not your herte ywys
To slee me thus, alas your name of trouthe
Is nowe forlon, and that is al my routhe

was there none other broche you lyste lete
To fasten wyth your newe loue (quod he)
But thylke broche that I wyth teres wete
You yaue, as for a remembraunce of me
None other cause alas, ne had ye
But for dispyte, and ehe for that ye mente
Al vtterly to shewen your entent

Through which I se, that clene out of your
Ye haue me cast, & I ne can nor may (minde
For al this worlde, within mine herte fynde
To wlonen you a quarter of a daye
In cursed tyme I borne was welaway
That you that done me al thys wo endure
Yet loue I best of any creature

Nowe god (q he) me sende yet the grace
That I may meten with this Dyomede
And trewly yf I haue myght and space
Yet shal I make I hope his sydes bledе
Nowe god (q he) that ought erst taken hede
To forthren trouth, and wronges to punice
Why nylt thou don a vengeaūce of thys vice

O Pandarus, that in dremes for to tryst
We blamed hast, & wont arte ofte vpbrayde
Now mayst thou sene thy selfe, yf that I lyst
How trew is now thy nece bryght Creseyde
In sondry formes (god it wote) she seyde
The goddes shewen both ioye and tene
In slepe and by my dreame it is nowe sene

And certaynly, withouten more speche
From hence forth, as forforth as I may
Myne owne deth in armes wol I seche
I recche nat howe soone be the daye
But trewly Creseyde, I wrete maye
whom I haue with al my might yserued
That ye thus done, I haue it not deserued

This Pādarus that al these thynges herde
And wyste wel he sayd as soth of this
He not a worde ayen to hym answerde
For sory of his frendes sorowe he is
And shamed for his nece hath done amys
And stante astonyed of these causes tway
As styl as stone, o worde ne couldе he say

But at the laste thus he spake, and seyde
My brother dere, I may do the no more
what shuld I sayne, I hate ywys Creseyde
And god it wote I wol hate her euermore
And that thou me belongeth erst done of yore
Hauyng vnto myne honour ne my reste
Ryght no regarde, I dyd al that the leste

If I dyd aught, that myght lyken the
It is me lefe, and of this treason nowe
God wote that it a sorowe is to me
And dredelesse, for hertes ease of you
Ryght fayne I wold amend it, wyst I how
And fro this worlde, almyghty god I pray
Deliuer her soone, I can no more say

Great was the sorow & playnt of Troylus
Bis

But forthe her course fortune aye gan holde
Creseyde loueth the sonne of Tydeus
And Troylus mote wepe in cares colde
Such is this worlde, who so it can beholde
In eche estate is lytle hertes reste
God leue vs to take it for the beste

In many cruel batayle out of drede
Of Troylus, thys ylke noble knyght
(As men may in these olde bokes rede)
was sene hys knyghthod, & his great might
And dredelesse hys ye day and nyght
Ful cruelly the grekes aye abought
(and alway most this Diomede) he sought

And ofte tyme (I fynde) that they mette
with bloody strokes, & with wordes greate
Assayeng howe her speares weren whette
And god it wote, wyth many a cruel beate
Gan Troylus vpon his helme to beate
But nathelesse, fortune it nought ne wolde
Of outher hande that eyther dyen shulde

And yf I had taken for to write
The armes of this ylke worthy man
Than wolde I of his battayles endyte
And for that I to write fyrst began
Of hys loue, I haue sayd as I can
Hys worthy dedes, who so hem lyste here
Rede Dares, he can tel hem al ylere

Beseechyng euery lady bryght of hewe
And euery gentle woman, what she be
Al be it that Creseyde was vntrewe
That for that gylt ye be nat wroth with me
Ye may her gylt in other bokes se
And gladder I wol write, yf you lest
Penelopes trouth, and good Alceste

Ne I say not thys al only for these men
But moste for women that betrayed be
Through falce folke, god yeue hem sorow ame
That wyth her great wyt and subtylte
Betrayen you, and thys meneth me
To speke, and in effecte you al I pray
Beth ware of men, & herkeneth what I say

Go lytle boke, go my lytel tragedy
There god thy maker yet er that I dye
So sende me might to make some comedye
But lytle boke, make thou none enuye
But subiecte ben vnto al poesye

And kysse the steppes, wher as ye seest pace
Of Vergil, Ouide, Homer, Lucan, & Stace

And for there is so great diuersite
In englyshe, and in wrytyng of our tonge
So pray I to god, that none mis write the
Ne the mysse metre, for defaute of tonge.
And redde where so thou be, or els songe
That thou be vnderstonde, god I beseche
But yet to purpose of my rather speche

The wrath, as I began you for to sey
Of Troylus, the grekes boughten dere
For thousandes hys handes maden dey
As he that was wothouten any pere
Saue in hys tyme Hector as I can here
But welaway, saue onely goddes wyl
Dispytously him slough the feerse Achyl

And whā that he was slaine in this manere
His lyght goste, ful blisfully is went
Vp to the holownesse of the seuenth spere
In hys place lefyng euery the element
And there he sawe, wyth ful auysement
The orbes hye, fixe and errātes, herkening armonye
wyth sownes ful of heuenyssh melodye

And downe from thence, fast he gan auyse
This lytle spotte of erth, that wyth the see
Enbraced is, and fully gan dispise
Thys wretched worlde, and held al vanite
To respecte of the playne felicite
That is in heuen aboue, and at the last
There he was slayn, his loking dowh he cast

And in him selfe he lough, right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for hys dethe so fast
And dampned al our werkes yt folo weth so
The blynde lust, whych that may nat last
And shulden al our herte on heuen cast
And forth he went, shortly for to tel
There as Mercurie sorted him to dwel

Such fyne hathe lo, this Troylus for loue
Such fyne hath al his greate worthynesse
Such fyne hath hys estate royal aboue
Such fyne his lust, such fyne hath his nobleisse
Such fyne hath falce worldes brotelnesse
And thus began his louyng of Creseyde
As I haue tolde, and in thys wyse he deyde

O yonge freshe folkes, he or she

In which ꝑ loue hy groweth with your age
Repayreth home from worldly vanite
And of your hertes hy castyth the vilage
To thylke god, that after his ymage
you made, and thyndeth all nys but a fayre
This worldꝰ ꝑ passeth sone, as floures fayre

And loueth him, ꝑ which that right for loue
Upon a crosse our soules for to bey
Fyrst starfe & rose, and syt in heuen aboue
For he nyl fayllen no wyght dare I sey
That wol his herte al holy on him ley
And sens he best to loue is, and most meke
what nedeth fayned loues for to seke

Lo here of paynems cursed olde rytes
Lo here what al her goddes may auayle
Lo here thys wretched worldes appetytes
Lo here the fyne and guerdon for trauayle
Of Ioue, Apollo, of Mars, & such raskayle
Lo here the forme of olde clerkes speche
In poetrye, yf ye her bokes seche

O moral Gower, thys boke I directe
To the, and to the Philosophical Strode
To vouchsafe there nede is to corrects
Of your benignitye and zeles goode
and to that sothfast Crist ꝑ starfe on roode
wythal myne herte of mercy euer I pray
And to the lorde aright, thus I speake & say

Thou one, two, and thre, eterne on lyue
That raignest aye in thre, two and one
Uncircumscript, & all mayst circumscryue
Us from vysible and inuysible fone
Defende, and to thy mercy euerychone
So make vs Jesus for thy mercy digne
For loue of mayde, & mother thyne benigne

¶ Thus endeth the fyfth boke and last of Troylus: and here foloweth the pyteful and dolorous testament of fayre Creseyde

The testament of Creseyde



Dolye seasonne tyll a careful dyte
Shulde corresponde, and be equiuolent
Right so it was whā I began to write
Thys tragedy, ꝑ wed der ryght feruent
whan Aries in myddes of thedent
showres of hayle can fro the north descende
that scantly fro the colde I myght me defende

Yet neuertheles wythin myne orature
I stode, whā Titan had his beames bright
withdrawen downe, and seyled vnder cure
And fayre Uenus the beautye of the nyght
Uprayse, and set vnto the west full ryght
Her golden face in oppositiowne
Of god Phebus directe descendinge downe

Throughout ꝑ glasse her bemes brast so fayre
That I might se on euery syde me by
The northern wynde had purifyed the ayre
And shedde his mysty cloudes fro the skye
The froste freseth, the blastes bytterly
Fro pole Artike come whistling loud & shyll
And caused me remoue ayenst my wyll

For I trusted that Uenus loues quene
To whom somtyme I byght obedience
Myn sadred hert of loue she, wold make grene
And therupon with humble reuerence
I thought to prayse her hye magnyfycence
But for great colde as than I letted was
And in my chambre to the fyre can pas

Though loue be hote, yet in a man of age
It kyndleth nat so soone as in youthed
Of whom the blode is flowyng in a rage
And in the olde, the corage dul and ded
Of which the fyre outward is best armed
To helpe by phisyke where ꝑ nature fayled
I am expert, for both I haue assayed

I made the fyre and beaked me about
Than toke I drynke my spirites to conforte
And armed me wel fro the colde therout
To cut the wynter nyght and make it shorte
I toke a quaere, and lefte al other sporte
wryten by worthy Chaucer glorious
Of fayre Creseyde, and lusty Troylus

And

And there I founde after that Diomede
Receyued had that lady bryght of hewe
How Troylus nere out of his wytte abrede
And wepte sore, wyth visage pale of hewe
For which wanhope his teares gan renewe
whyle esperous reioysed him agayne
Thus whyle in ioy he liued & whyle in payne

Of her behest he had great comfortynge
Trustyng to Troy þ she wolde make retour
which he desyred most of al erthly thynge
For why she was his onely paramoure
But whan he sawe passed both day & hour
Of her gaynicome, in sorowe can oppresse
His wofui herte, in care and heuynesse

Of his distresse me nedeth not reherse
For worthy Chaucer in that same boke
In goodly termes, and in ioly verse
Compyled hath his cares who wyl loke
To breake my slepe another queare I toke
In whych I founde the fatal destyny
Of fayre Creseyde, which ended wretchedly

who wote if al that Chaucer wrote be trew
Nor I wotte not yt this narration
Be authorysed, or forged of the newe
Of some poete by hys inuention
Made to reporte the lamentation
And woful ende of thys lusty Creseyde
And what distresse she was in or she deyde

whan Diomede had al his appetyte
And more fully fylled of thys fayre lady
Upon another sette was al his delyte
And sende to her a lyberi repudy
And her excluded fro his company
Than desolate she walked vp and downe
As some men saine, in the courte as comune

O fayre Creseyde, the floure and a per se
Of Troy & Grece, how were thou fortunate
To chaunge in fyith al thy fermynte
And be with fleshly lust so maculate
And go among the grekes early and late
So gigliotyke, taking thy foule pleasaunce
I haue pyte the shulde fal such mischaunce

Yet neuertheles, what euer me deme or say
In sclomful langage of thy brutelnesse
I shal excuse, as ferforth as I may
Thy womanheed, thy wisedome & fayrnesse
Thy which fortune hath put to such distresse
As her pleased, & nothing through the gylte
Of the, through wicked langage to be spilte

Thys fayre lady on thys wise destitute
Of al comforte and consolation
Right priuely wythout felowshyp or refute
Disherisde, passed out of the town
A myle or two vnto a mansioun
Bylded ful gay, where her father Calcas
which thã amõge the grekes dwelling was

whan he her sawe, the cause he can enquyre
Of her cõmyng, she sayd syghyng ful sore
Fro Diomede had goten his desyre
He wore wery and wolde of me no more
q Calcas doughter, wepe thou not therfore
Paraventure al cometh for the best
welcome to me thou arte ful dere a gest

Thys olde Calcas, after the lawe was tho
was keper of the temple as a preest
In which Venus and her sonne Cupido
were honoured, and hys chambre was nest
To which Creseyde wt bale enwed in brest
Used to passe, her prayers for to say
whyle at the last vpon a solempne day

As custome was, the people ferre and nere
Before the noone, vnto the temple went
with sacrifyce, deuoute in theyr manere
But styl Creseyde heuy in her entent
In to the church wolde not her selfe present
For gyuyng the people any demyng
Of her repulse fro Diomede the kyng

But passed in to a secrete oratore
where she myght wepe her woful destyny
Behynde her backe she closed fast the dore
And on her knees bare fel downe in hye
Upon Venus and Cupide angerly
She cryed out, and sayd in thys wyse
Alas that euer I made you sacrifyce

ye gaue me ones a diuyne responsayle
That I shulde be the floure of loue in Troy
Now am I made an vnworthy outwayle
And al in care translated is my ioye
who shal me gyde? who shal me now cõuoy
Syth I fro Diomede, and noble Troylus
Am clene excluded, as abiecte odious

O false Cupyde, none is to wyte but thou
And thy mother of loue, that blynd goddace
Ye caused me vnderstande alway and trow
The seede of loue was sowen on my face
& aye grewe grene throuz your soupie grace
But nowe alas, ꝑ seed wyth frost is slayne
And I fro louers lefte and al forlayne

whan thys was sayd, downe in an ertasy
Rauyshed in spryte, in a dreame she fel
And by apparaunce herde where she dyd lye
Cupide the kyng tynkyng a syluer bel
which men myght here fro heuen in to hel
At whose sounde before Cupide apertes
the seuē planets discendyng fro their spertes

which hath power of all thyng generable
To rule and stere by their great influence
weder and wynde, and course variable
And fyrste of al Saturne gaue hys sentence
which gaue to Cupide lytle reuerence
But as a boystous churle in hys manere
Came crabbedly wyth austryne loke & chere

his face frouncd, his here was lyke ꝑ leed
Hys teth chattred, & shuttred wyth the chyn
His eyen drouped hole sonken in hys heed
Out at his nose the myldrop fast ran ryn
with lyppes blo, & chekes leane and thyn
The ryle rokels ꝑ fro hys here downe honge
was wonder great, & as a speare as longe

Attour his brode his yarde lockes lay
Felted vnlayre, ouertret wyth frostes hore
His garment and his gate fal gay of gray
His wedered wede fro hi ꝑ winde out wore
A boustous bow wythin his hande he bore
Vnder his gyrdel a sacke of felone flayns
Fedded with ryse, & heeded wyth holtayns

Than Jupiter cygnt fayre and amiable
God of the lerres in the fyrmament
And norice to al thyng generable
Fro hys father Saturne farre different
with burly face, and browes bryght & brent
Upon hys heed a garlonde wonderly gaye
Of floures fayre, as it had ben in Maye

his voice was clere as christal was his eien
As golde wier so glytering was his heare
His garmente and his gyte ful gay of greene
wyth golden lystes gylte on euery geare
A burly brande aboute his myddle he beare
In his ryght hande he had a groundē spere
Of hys father, the wrath fro vs to bere

Next after him came Mars the god of yre
Of stryfe, debate, and all discencioun
To chyde and fyght, as feerce as any fyre
In harde harneise hewomōde & habergioun
And on his haunch a cruelly fel fauchoun
And in his hande he had a cruelly swerde
wrythyng his face with many angry worde

Shaking his brande, before Cupide he come
with reed visage, & grisely glowyng eyen
And at his mouth a blubber stode of fome
Lyke to a boore, whettinge his tuskes keyn
Right tursture lyke, but temperaunce in tene
An horne blew vth many boustous bragge
which al this world vth warre hath made to wagge

Thā fayre Phebus, lanterne & lāpe of lyght
Of man & beest, both frute and flourishyng
Tender norice, and banysher of nyght
And of the worlde, causyng by his mouyng
And influence, lyfe in al erthly thyng
without cōforte of whom of force to nought
Must go dye, ꝑ al this world hath wrought

As kyng royal, he rode vpon a chare
The which Phiton sōtyme gyded wright
the bryghtnesse of hys face whā it was bare
Non might beholde for persing of his sight
This golden carte with fyry beames bright
Foure yoked stedes ful different of hewe
But bayt or tyring through the speres drewe

The first was sored, vth mane as reed as rose
Called Eoye in to the orient
The seconde stede to name, hight Ethyose
whyterly and pale, and some dele ascendent
The thyrde Perose, right hote & eke feruent
The fourth was blacke, called Phelegeton
which rolleth Phebus downe in to the se

Venus was there present, that goddes gay
Her sonnes quarel to defende and make
his owne complaynt, cladde in a ryce aray
the one halfe greene thother halfe sable blake
white hert as golde, kembed & shed a bake
But in her face semed great variaunce
whyle partlye trouth, & whyles incōstaunce

Under

Under smylyng she was dissimulate
Prouocatyue with blynkes amorous
And sodaynly chaunged and alterate
Angry as any serpent venomous
Ryght pungityue with wordes odious
Thus variant she was, who lyst take kepe
With one eye laugh, and with ỳ other wepe

In tokenyng that al fleshly paramour
Which Venus hath in rule & gouernaunce
Is somtyme swete, somtyme bytter & sour
Ryght vnstable and full of variaunce
Wynged with careful ioy & false pleasaunce
Now hote now colde, now blythe, now full
Now grene as lefe, now widred & ago(o)wo

With boke in hand, than come Mercurious
Ryght eloquent and full of rethoryc
With polyte termes and delicious
With penne and ynke to report all readyē
Setting songes, and syngen merely
His hode was red beried attour his crown
Lyke tyll a poete of the olde fassyoun

Botes he bare with fyne electuaries
And sugred syropes for digestion
Spyces belonging to the potiquaries
With many holsome swete confection
Doctor in phisyke cled in a scarlet gowne
And furred wele as such one ought to be
Honest & good, and nat a worde couth lye.

Next after him come lady Synthia
The last of al, and sowrest in her spere
Of colour blacke, busked with hornes twa
And in the nyght she lysteth best tapere
Pawe as the leed, of colour nothyng clere
For al the light she boroweth at her brother
Titan, for of her self she hath none other

Her gyte was gray and full of spottes blak
And on her breest a churle paynted full euen
Beryng a bush of thornes on his backe
Which for his theft mizt clime no ner ỳ heuē
Thus whā they gadred wer ỳ goddes seuē
Mercurius they chosed with one assent
To be forespeker in the parlyment

Who had ben there and lyknyng for to here
His facondetonge, and termes eraquisyte
Of rethorike the practyke he myght lere
In briefe sermon, a pregnaūt sentence write
Before Cupide, valyng his cappe alyte
Spet is the cause of that vacatioun
And he anon shewed his entencioun

Lo ỳ Cupide, who wol blaspheme ỳ name
Of his owne god, eyther in worde or dede
To all goddes he doth both losse and shame
And shulde haue bytter paynes to his mede
I say this by yonder wretche Creseyde
The which thrugh me was sotyme flour of
Me & my mother she stately gan re- (loue
proue

Saying of her great infelicite
I was the cause, and my mother Venus
She called a blynde goddes & myght nat se
With sclaunder and defame iniurious
Thus her lyuyng vnclene and lecherous
She wolde retort in me and my mother
To whō I shewed my grace aboue al other

And syth ye are al seuen delicate
Participant of deuyne sapience
This great iniure done to our hye estate
Me thynk wh payn we shulde make recopence
Was neuer to goddes done such violence
As well for you, as for my selfe I saye
Therfore go helpe to reuenge I you praye

Mercurius to Cupide gaue answere
And sayd, syr kyng: my counsayle is that ye
Referre you to the hyest planet here
And take to him the lowest of degree
The payne of Creseyde for to modefye
As god Saturne with hym take Synthia
I am cotent, ỳ he, to take they twa

Than thus proceded Saturne & the moone
Whan they the matter rypely had degest
For the despyte to Cupid that she had done
And to Venus open and manifest
In al her lyfe with payne to be oppiest
And turnēt sore, with syknesse incurable
And to all louers be abhominable.

This doleful sentēce Saturne tok on hand
And passed down wher careful Creseyd lay
And on her heed he layde a frosty wande
Than lawfully on this wyse can he say
Thy great fayrnesse, and all thy beauty gay
Thy wanton blood, & eke thy golden here
Here I exclude fro the for euermore.

I chaunge thy mirth into melancoly
Which is the mother of all pensyuenesse
Thy mayster and thy hete into colde & drye
Thy insolence, thy play, & thy wantonesse
To great bitternesse, thy pompe & thy rychesse
Into mortal nede and great penuritie
Thou suffre shalt, and as a beggar dye

O cruell Saturne frowarde and angrye
Harde is thy dome, and to malicyous
Of fayr Creseyd why hast thou no mercye
Which was so swete, gentle, and amorous
Withdrawe thy sentence and be gracyous
As thou wer neuer so shewerth through thy
A wreketul sentence gyuen on Creseyd (dede

Thā Cynthia, whan Saturne past away
Out of her seate, discended downe belyue
And red a byll on Creseyde where she lay
Contenyning this sentence diffynityue
Fro hrale of body here I the depryue
And to thy syknesse shalbe no recure
But in dolour thy dayes to endure

Thy christal eyen mengred wh blood I make
Thy voyce so clere vnpleasaunt here & hace
Thy lusty lere ouerspred wh spottes blake
And lumpes hawe apering in thy face
Wher thou comest eche man shal flye ꝑ place
This shalt thou go beggyng fro house to
With cup & clapper lyke a lazarous (house

This dooly dreame, this vgly visyon
Brought tyll an ende, Creseyd fro it awoke
And all that court and conuocatyon
Vanysshed away, than rose she vp & toke
A polished glasse, & her shadowe couth loke
And whā she sawe her vysage so deformate
If she in hert were wo, I ne wyt god wate

wepyng full sore, Jo what it is (q she)
with frowarde langage to moue & stere
Our crabbed goddes, and so is sene on me
Wy blaspheminyng now haue I bought full
All rethly ioye and myrth I set arere (dere
Alas this day, alas this woful tyde
whan I began with my goddes to chyde

Be this was sayd, a childe came fro the hal
To warne Creseyde the supper was redy
Fyll knocked at the doze, and eft couth cal
Madam, your father byddeth you com i hy
He hath marueyl so longe on grounde ye lye
And sayth your bestes beth to longe sodē
The goddes wote al your entent ful wele

Quod she fayr chylde, go to my father dere
And pray hym come to speke with me anon
And so he dyd, & sayd doughter what chere
Alas (q she) father, my myrth is gone
How so (q he) and she can al expone
As I haue told, the vengeaūce & the wrake
For her trespasse Cupide on her couth take

He loked on her vgly lepers face
The which before was white as lely flour
Wryngyng his handes, oftymes sayd alas
That her had lyued to se that woful houre
For he knewe wel, that ther was no succour
To her sykenesse, and ꝑ doubled his payne
This was ther care ynowe betwyx hem (twayne

whā ther togyther mourned had full longe
q Creseyde father, I wolde not be kende
Therfore in secrete wyse ye let me gange
To yon hospytall at the townes ende
And thyder som meat for charitie me sende
To lyue vpon, for al myrth in this earth
Is fro me gone, suche is my wicked werth

whan in a mantell and a Beuer hat
with cuppe and clapper wonder pruely
He opened a secrete gate, and out thereat
Conueyde her, that no man shulde espye
There to a vyage halfe a myle therby
Delyuered her in at the spyttel house
And dayly sende her parte of his almous

Some knewe her wel, & som had no knowe
Of her, because she was so deformate (lege
with byles blake ouerspred in her vysage
And her fayre colour faded and alterate
Yet they presumed for her hye regrate
And styll mourning she was of noble kyn
With better wyll, there they toke her inne

The day passed, and Phebus wēt vnto rest
The cloudes blacke on euery syde al the sky
God wote ꝑ Creseide were a sorowfull gest
Seeing that vncouth face and herbory
But meate or drynke she dressed her to nye
In a darke corner of the house alone
And on this wyse wepynge, she made her mone.

Here

Here foloweth the complaynt of Crlleyde



Hop of sorowe sonken into care
O caytife Creseyd now and euermare
Gone is thy ioye, and al thy myrth in erth
Of all blytheneſſe now art thou blacke & bare
There is no salue may helpe thy sare
Fell is thy fortune, wycked is thy werth
Thy blysse is banyſshed & thy bale inherde
Under the great god yt I grauen ware
where men of Grece ne yet of Troye myght (herde

where is thy chambre wantonly beſene
with burly bed, & bankers browded bene
Spyces and wyne to thy collacioun
The cuppes al of golde and syluer shene
Thy ſwete meates serued in plates clene
with sauery sauce of a good facioun
Thy gay garmētes wᵗ many goodly goune
Thy pleſaut laune pynned w golden pene
Alas atrete thy great royall renoune.

where is thy gardeyne with thy grenes gay
And freshe flowres, which ỳ quene Florayne
had paynted pleſauntly in euery payne
where thou were wont ful merily in May
To walke and take the dewe be it was day
And here the merle and mauyſe many one
with ladyes fayre in carollyng to gone
And se the royall renkes in the raye

This leper loge take for thy goodly bour
And for thy bed, take nowe a bonche of stro
For wayled wyne and meetes thou had tho
Take mouled breed, pynat and syder soure
But cuppe and clapper is al now ago.

My clere voyce and my courtly carollynge
Is ranke as roke, ful hideous heer and hace
Deformed is the fygure of my face
To loke on it no people hath lykyng
Noſped in syght, I say with sore syghinge
Lyng amonge the leper folke alas.

O ladyes fayre of Troy and Grece attende
My freyle fortune, myne infelicitie
My great myſchef which noman can amend
And in your mynde a myrrour make of me
As I am now peraduenture that ye
For al your might may come to ỳ same end
Or els worſe yf any worſe may be
Beware therfore aproches nere your ende.

Nought is your fayrneſſe but a fading flure
Nought is your famous laude & hye honour
But wynde inflate in other mens eares
Your rosyng red to rotyng shal retour
Example make of me in your memore
which of ſuch thiges, woful witnes beares
All welth in erth as wynd away it weares
Beware therfore aprocheth nere your hour

Thus chydyng with her dreery deſtiny
wepyng, she woke ỳ nyght fro ende to ende
But all in vayne her dole, her careful crye
Myght not remedy, ne yet her mourning mend
A leper lady rose, and to her wende
And sayd: why spurneſt thou agayne ỳ wal
To ſlee thy ſelfe and mend nothynge at all

Sith that thy weping but doubleth thy wo
I counſayle the make vertue of a nede
Go lerne to clap thy clapper to and fro
And lerne after the lawe of lepers lede
Ther was no bote but forthw̄ tha she yede
Fro place to place, whyle colde & hugre sore
Compelled her to be a ranke beggore

That same tyme of Troy the garnyſoun
which had the cheftayne worthye Troylus
Thurgh iopardy of war had ſtrykē down
knyghtes of Grece in nobre marueylous
with great triumph and laude victorious
Agayne to Troy ryght royally they rode
The way wher Creseyde w̄ the leper stode

Seing that company come all with o stre
They gaue a crye, & shoke cups good spede
worthy lordes, for goddes loue of heauen
To vs lepers, parte of your almeſſe dede
Than to her crye noble Troylus toke hede
Hauyng pytie, nere by the place gan paſſe
wher Creseyd sat, nat wetig what she was

Than vpon hym she keſt vp both her eyen
And w̄ a blynke it come into his thought
That he sometyme her face before had seyn

But

But she was in such plite [illegible] hermoure
Yet than her loke into his mynde he broure
The swete vysage & amyous bieuhynge
Of fayre Creseyd, lothynge his owne dering

No wonder was, suppose in mynde that he
Toke her figure so soone, and so now why
The[illegible]doll of a thynge in case may be
So depe enpryntyd in the fantasy
That it defendeth the wyttes outwardly
And so appereth in forme and lyke estate
Within the mynde as it was figurate

A spark of loue than tyl his hert couth spring
And kyndeled his body in a fyre
With hote feuer, in swet and trymblynge
Him toke, whyle he was redy to expyre
To beare his shylde his breest begon to tyre
Within a whyle he chaunged many a hewe
And neuertheles wat one another knewe.

For knyghtly pyte and memoriel
Of fayre Creseyd, a gyrdle gan he take
A purse of golde, and many a gay iewel
And in ỳ shyrt of Creseyd downe can shake
Tha rode awaye, and nat a worde he spake
Pensife in hert whyle he came to ỳ towne
And for great care ofrith almost fel downe

The lepre folke to Creseyde than couth
To[illegible]se the equall distributioun (drawe
Of ỳ almous, but whan the golde they saw
Eche one to other priuely can rowne
And sayd: yon lorde hath more affectioun
How euer it be vnto yon lazarous
Than to vs all, we knowe by his almous

what lorde is yon (q̃ she) haue ye no feler
That doth to vs so great humanitie
Yes q̃ a lepre man, I knowe him wele
Syr Troylus it is a knyght gentle & free
Whan Creseyde vnderstode that it was he
Wyster thã sele there stert a better stound
Thurghout her hert, & fyl down to ỳ ground

Whan she ouercom with syghyng sore & sad
With many a careful crye & colde atone
Now is my breest with stormy stoudes stad
Wrapped in wo wretch fulwyl of one
Than fel in swoun ful oft or she wolde fone
And euer in her swouning cryed she thus
O false Creseyd, & true knyght Troylus.

Thy loue, thy lande, and all thy gentylnesse
I compted smal in my prosperitie
So elated I was in wantonnesse
And clambe vpon the fykel wele so hye
All fayth and loue I promoted to the
Was in thy selfe fekle and ruthyous
O false Creseyde, & true knyght Troylus

For loue of me thou kept countenaunce
Honest and chaste in conuersatioun
Of all women protectour and defence
Thou were, and helped they r opynioun
My mynde on fleshly foule affectioun
Was enclyned to lustes lecherous
Fye false Creseyde, o true knyght Troylus

Louers beware, and take good hede aboue
Whom ỳ ye loue, for whan ye suffre payne
I let you wyt ther is right fewe throughout
Who ỳ ye may trust to haue true loue agayne
Proue whã ye wol your labour is in bayne
Therfore I rede ye take them as ye fynde
For they are as fad as wethercock in wynd

Bycause I knowe the great vnstablenesse
Bytrell as glasse, vnto my selfe I say
Trustyng in other as great buttelnesse
As inconstaunt, and as vntrue of fayre
Thouz som be true, I wot ryzt fewe ar they
Who fyndeth trouthe, let hym his lady ruse
Alone but my selfe as now I will accuse

whan this was sayd, w̃ paper she sat down
And in this maner made her testament
Here I bequeth my corse and carroun
With wormes and with toodes to be rent
My cup, my clapper, and myne ornament
And al my gold these lepers folke shal haue
Whan I am dede, to bury me in graue

This royal ryngе set with this Rubye red
Which Troylus in dowry to me sende
To hym agayne I leane it whã I am dede
To make my careful dethe vnto hym kende
Thus I conclude shortly and make an ende
My spirit I leue to Diane where she dwels
To walke w̃ her in waste wodes & welles.

O Diomede thou hast both broche and belt
Which Troylus gaue me in tokenyng

Of

Of this true loue, and vp the word she sweit
And soone a leper man toke of the synge
Than buryed her withouten tarying
To Troylus forth with the synge he bare
And of creseyde the deth he can declare

whan he had herde her great infirmitie
Her legacy, and lamentacioun
And how she ended in suche pouertie
He sweit for wo & fell downe in a swoun
For sorowe his hert to brast was boun
Syghyng full sadly sayde I can nomore
She was untrue, and wo is me therfore.

Hom saith he made a tomb of marble gray
And wrote her name and superscription
And layde it on her grane where as she laye
In golden letters cōtaynynge this reasoun
Lo fayre ladyes, Creseyde of Troy ꝑ toune
Sometyme cōpted the floure of womanhed
Under this stone late leper lyeth deed.

Now worthy women in this balade shore
Made for your worshyp and instruction
Of charitie I monyth and exhorte
Synge nat your loue with false disception
Beare in your mynde this sore conclusion
Of fayre Creseyde, as I haue sayde before
Syth she is deed I speke of her nomore.

¶ Thus endeth the piteful and dolorous testament of fayre Creseyde:
And hereafter folowyth the
legende of good
women.
(:)

¶ The legende of good women.



Thousande tymes I haue herde men tel
That there is ioye in heuen & payne in hel
And I accorde it wel that it is so
But natheleſſe, yet wot I wele also
That there nys none dwelling in this countrie
That eyther hath in heuen or hel ybe
Ne may of it none other wayes wytten
But as he herde ſayd, or ſounde it wrytten
For by aſſaye there maye no man it preue
But god forbede, but men ſhulde leue
well more thynge than they han ſene with eye
Men ſhall nat wenen euery thynge a lye
But yf hym ſelfe it ſeeth, or elis it doth
For god wot thyng is neuer the leſſe ſoth
Though euery wyght ne maye it nat yſe
Bernarde the monke ne ſaugh al parde
Than mote we to bokes that we fynde
(Through which ỳ old thinges ben in minde
And to the doctryne of theſe olde wyſe)
Yeue credence in euery ſkylfull wyſe
That tellen of theſe olde appreued ſtoures
Of holynеſſe, of reygnes, of victoires
Of loue, of hate, of other ſondry thynges
Of which I may nat make reherſynges
And yf that olde bokes were awaye
Yloſte were of remembraunce the kaye
well ought vs than honouren and beleue
Theſe bokes, there we han non other preue
And as for me, though ỳ I can but lyte
On bokes for to rede I me delyte
And to hem yeue I fayth and ful credence
And in myne hert haue hem in reuerence
So hertely, that there is game none
That fro my bokes maketh me to gone
But it be ſeldom on the holy day
Saue certaynly whā ỳ the moneth of May
Is comen, and ỳ I here the foules ſynge
And that the floures gynnen for to ſpryngе
Farewell my boke, and my deuocioun
Now haue I than eke this condicioun
That of all the floures in the mede
Than loue I moſt theſe floures white & rede
Such ỳ men callen dayeſies in our toune
To hem haue I ſo great affectioun
As I ſayd erſt, whan comen is the May
That in my bed there daweth me no day
That I nam vp, & walkyng in the mede
To ſeen this floure ayenſt the ſunne ſprede
whan it vp ryſeth early by the morowe
That blyſful ſyght ſoftneth al my ſorowe
So glad am I, whan that I haue preſence
Of it, to done it all reuerence
As he that is of all floures floure
Fulfylled of al vertue and honour
And euer yliche fayre, and freſh of hewe
And euer I loue it, and euer ylike it newe
And euer ſhal, yf that myne hert dyre
All ſwere I nat of this, I wol nat lyre
There ſtoued no wyght hotter in his lyue
And whan that it is eue I renne blyue
Aſſoone as euer the ſunne gynneth weſt
To ſene this floure, how it wol go to reſt
For feare of nyght, ſo hateth ſhe darkneſſe
How there is plainly ſpred in the brightneſſe
Of the ſunne, for there it wol vncloſe
Alas that I ne had Englyſhe tyme or proſe
Suffiſaunt this floure to preyſe aryght
But helpeth ye that han connyngе & myght
Ye louers that can make of ſentement
In this caſe ought ye be diligent
To forthren me ſomwhat in my labour
whether ye ben yt the leſe or with the floure
For wel I wot, that ye han hert beſonne
Of makyng, ropen, and lad away the corne
And I come after, gleenyng here and there
And am ful glad, yf I may fynde an ere
Of any goodly worde that ye han leſte
And though it happen me to rehercen eſte
That ye han in your freſh ſonges ſayde
For-bereth me, and beth nat euyll apayde
Syth that ye ſe, I do it in the honoure
Of loue: and eke in ſeruyce of the floure
whom ỳ I ſerue, as I haue wyt or myght
She is the clereſte and the bery lyght
That in this darke world me wynt & leadeth
The hert within my ſorowful breſt you dreadeth
And loueth ſo ſore, ỳ ye ben verely
The maſtres of my wyt, and nothyng I
My word, my werkes, as knyght ſo in your
That as an harpe obeyeth to ỳ hond bond
And make it ſowne after his fyngeryngе
Right ſo may ye out of my hert bryngе
Such voyce, ryght as you lyſt, to laugh or
Be ye my guyde, and lady ſouerayne playn

Is to myne erthly god, to you I call
Both in thys werke, and my sorowes all
But wherfore that I spake to yeue credence
To olde stozyes, and done hem reuerence
And that men musten moze thynge beleue
Then men may sene at eye, or els preue
That shall I seyne, when that I se my tyme
I maye not all at ones speake in ryme
My herte goost, that thursteth alway newe
To sene hys floure so yōge, so fresh of hewe
Constrayned me, wyth so gredy desyre
That in myne herte I felt yet the fyre
That made me to ryse er it were daye
And thys was nowe þ fyrst morow of May
wyth dredfull herte, and glad deuocion
For to ben at the resurrection
Of thys floure, when that it shulde vnclose
Agayne the sunne, that rose as reed as rose
That in the brest was of the beest that daye
That Angenors doughter ladde away
And downe on knees anone ryght I me set
And as I coulde, thys freshe floure I gret
Knelynge alwaye, tyll it vnclosed was
Upon the smale, softe, swete gras
That was wt floures swete embrouded all
Of suche swetnesse, & suche adour ouer all
That for to speke of gume, herbe, or tre
Comparyson may none ymaked be
For it surmounteth playnly all odoures
And of ryche beautye all floures
Forgotten had the earth hys poore estate
Of wynter, that hym naked made & mate
And wyth hys swerde of cold so sore greued
Nowe hath the attempre sunne all that releued
That naked was, and clad it newe agayne
The smale foules, of the reason fayne
That of the panter and the nette ben scaped
Upon the fouler, that hem made awhaped
In wynter, and destroyed had her brood
In hys dispite hem thought it dyd hem good
To synge of hym, and in her songe dyssyse
The foule chorle, that for hys couetyse
Had hem betrayed, wyth hys sophistrye
Thys was her songe: The fouler we defye
And all hys craft, and some songen clere
Layes of loue, that ioye it was to here
In worshyppyng & prayseynge of her make
And for the newe blyssful somers sake
Upon the braunches full of blosmes softe
In her delyte, they turned hem full ofte
And songen, blessed be seynt Valentyne
For on hys daye I chese you to be myne
wythouten repentynge, myne herte swete
And therwythall her beckes gonnen mete
yeldynge honoure, and humble obeysaunce
To loue, and dydden her other obseruaunce
That longeth vnto loue, and to nature
Constrewe that as you lyst, I do no cure
And tho that had done vnkyndnesse
As doth the Tidyfe, for newe fangelnesse
Besought mercy of her trespasynge
And humbly songe her repentynge
And sworen on the blosomes to be trewe
So that her makes wolde vpon hem rewe
And at the last maden her accorde
Al foude they Daūger for the tyme a lorde
Yet Pyte, through hys strōge gentyl myght
Forgaue, and made mercy passen ryght
Through innocence, and ruled curtesye
But I ne cleape it not innocence folye
Ne false pyte, for vertue is the meane
As Ethyke sayeth, in suche maner I meane
And thus these foules, voyde of all malyce
Accorded to loue, and laften vyce
Of hate, and songe all of one accorde
welcome sommer, our gouernour and lorde
And zephirus, and Flora gentelly
Yaue to the floures softe and tenderly
Her swote brethe, & made hem for to sprede
As god and goddesse of the flowry mede
In whych me thought I myght day by day
Dwellen alway, the tolv monthe of May
Wythouten slepe, wythoute meate or drynke
Adowne full softly I gan to synke
And leanynge on my elbowe and my syde,
The longe day I shope me for to abyde
For nothynge els, and I shall not lye
But for to loke vpon the deysye
That well by reason men it call maye
The dayesy, or els the eye of the daye
The emprysse, and floure of floures all
I praye to god that fayre mote she fall
And all that louen floures, for her sake
But natheless, ne wene not that I make
In prayseynge of the floure agayne the leefe
Nomore then of the corne agayne the sheefe
For as to me nys leuer none ne lother
I nam wyth holden yet wyth neuer nother
Ne I not who serueth leefe ne who þ floure
Well brouken they her seruyce or labour
For thys thynge is all of another tonne
Of olde storye, er such thynge was begonne
When þ the sunne, out of the south gan west
And that thys floure gan close, & gan to rest

For derknes of ꝑ nyght, ꝑ whiche the dredde
Home to myn house, ful swyftly I me spedde
To gon to reste, and erly for to ryse
To sene this flour to spriede, as I deuyse
And in a lytell herber that I haue
That benched was on turues fresshe ygraue
I bade men shulde me my couche make
For deyntie of the newe sommers sake
I bade hem strawen flowres on my bedde
whan I was layde, and had myn eyen hedde
I fell a slepe, and slepte an houre or two
Me mette howe I lay in the medowe tho
To sene this floure, that I loue so and drede
And from a ferre came walkyng in the mede
The god of Loue, and in hys handē a quene
And she was cladde in royall habyte grene
A fret of golde she had next her heere
And vpon that a whyte crowne she beere
wyth floxoums small, and I shall nat lye
For all the worlde ryght as a dayesye
Ycrowned is, wyth whyte leaues lyte
So were the floxoums of her coxown whyte
For of o perle fyne oriental
Her whyte coxowne was ymaked all
For which the white coxowne, aboue ꝑ grene
Made her lyke a dayesye for to sene
Considred eke her fret of golde aboue
I clothed was this mighty god of Loue
In sylke embrouded, full of grene greues
In whiche a fret of reed rose leues
The freshest sens ꝑ worlde was fyrst begōne
His gylte heere was coxowned with a sonne
In stede of golde, for heuynesse and weight
Therwith me thoxt his face shone so bright
That well vnnethes might I him beholde
And in his hāde, me thoxt I saw him holde
Two fury dartes, as the gledes rede
And angelyke his wynges sawe I spriede
And all be that men sayne, that blynde is he
Algate me thought that he myght se
For sternely on me he gan beholde
So that his lokyng dothe myn herte colde
And by the hande he held this noble quene
Crowned wyth whyte, & clothed al in grene
So womanly, so benygne, and so mete
That in this worlde, though ꝑ men wold sete
Nalfe her beautie shulde they nat fynde
In creature that formed is by kynde
And therfore may I sayne, as thynketh me
This songe, in prayesyng of this lady fre.

Hyde Absolon thy gylte tresses clere
Hester lay thou thy meknesse al adoun
Hyde Jonathas al thy frendely manere
Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun
Make of your wyfehode no comparysoun
Hyde ye your beauties, Ysoude & Helleyne
My lady cometh, that al this may disdayne

Thy fayre body, let it nat apere
Lauyne, and thou Lucrece of Rome toun
And Polixene, that boughten loue so dere
And Cleopatras, with all thy passyoun
Hyde ye your trouthe of loue, & your renoun
And thou Tisbe, that hast of loue such payne
My lady cometh, that all this may disdayne

Hero, Dido, Laodomia, all yfere
And Phillis, hangyng for the Demophoun
And Canace, espyed by thy chere
Hipsypyle betrayed with Jasoun
Make of your trouth neyther bost ne soun
Nor Hypermystre, or Ariadne, ye twayne
My lady cometh, that all this may disdayne

¶ This balade may full well ysongen be
As I haue sayd erst, by my lady fre
For certaynly, all these mowe nat suffyse
To apperen wyth my lady in no wyse
For as the sunne wolle the fyre disdayne
So passeth all my lady souerayne
That is so good, so fayre, so debonayre
I pray to god that euer fall her fayre
For had comfoxte ben of her presence
I had ben dede, wythouten any defence
For drede of Loues wordes, and his chere
As whan tyme is, hereafter ye shall here
Behynde this god of Loue vpon the grene
I sawe comyng of ladyes nyneteene
In royall habyt, a full easy pace
And after hem came of women suche a trace
That sens that god Adam had made of erthe
The thyrde parte of mankynde, or the fyrthe
Ne wende I nat by possibylyte
Had euer in thys wyde worlde ybe
And trewe of loue, these women were echon
Now whether was ꝑ a wōder thyng or non
That right anon, as that they gonne espye
This floure, whych that I clepe the dayesye
Full sodaynly they slynten all at ones
And kneled downe, as it were for the nones
And songen with o voyce, heale & honour
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
That beareth our alder prise in figurynge

Her whyte

Her whyte coronne bearith the wytnessyng
And with that worde, acompas enuyroun
They sytten hem full softely adown
First sate the god of loue, & sythe hys quene
With the whyte coronne, clad all in greue
And sythen all the remenaunt, by and by
As they were of estate, full curtesly
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place
The mountenaunce of a furlong way of space
I kneling by this floure, in good entente
Bode to knowen what this people mente
As styll as any stone, tyll at the laste
This god of loue, on me his eyen caste
And said, who knelieth there: and I answerde
Unto hys askyng, whan that I it herde
And sayd, fyr it am I, and come hym nere
And called hym, (q he) what doest thou here
So nygh myne owne floure, so boldely
It were better worthy trewly
A wolfe to nighen nere my floure thā thou
And why sir, q I, and it lyke youe
For thou (q he) ert therto nothyng able
It is my rewyne, digne and delytable
And thou my foe, & all my folke werreyest
And of myne olde seruauntes thou missayest
And hyndrest hem, wyth thy translation
And lettest folke from her deuocion
To serue me, and holdest it folye
To serue loue, thou mayest it nat denye
For in playne text, wythouten nede of glose
Thou hast translated the Romaut of þ Rose
That is an heresye ayenst my lawe
And makest wyse folke fro me withdrawe
And of Creseyde, thou hast sayd as the lyste
That maketh men to women lesse tryste
That ben as trewe as euer was any stele
Of thyn answere auyse the wyght wele
For though thou renyed haste my lay
As other worthes haue done many a day
By seynt Venus, that my mother is
If that thou lyue, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that it shall wel be sene
Tho spake this lady, clothed al in grene
And sayd, god wyght of your curtesye
Ye mote herken yf he can replye
Ygaynst all thys, that ye haue to him meued
A god ne shulde nat be thus agreued
But of hys deyte he shall be stable
And therto gracious and merciable
And yf ye were a god, that knowen all
Than might it be, as I you tellen shall
Thys man to you may falsely ben accused
That as by wyght, hym ought ben excused
For in your court is many a losengeour
And many a queynt toteler accusour
That tabouren in your eares many a soun
Ryght after her ymaginatioun
To haue your daliaunce, and for enuy
These ben the causes, and I shall not lye
Enuy is lauender of the court alwaye
For she ne parteth neyther nyght ne daye
Out of the house of Cesar thus sayeth Dant
Who so that goeth algate she wol not want
And eke peraventer for thys man is nyce
He myght done it, gessynge no malyce
But for he vseth thynges for to make
Him recketh nought of what mater he take
Or hym was boden make thylke tweye
Of some persone, and durst it not wythseye
Or hym repenteth vtterly of thys
He ne hath not done so greuously amys
To translaten that olde clerkes wryten
As though that he of malyce wold endyten
Dyspyte of loue, & had hym selfe it wrought
This shuld a rightwise lord haue in his thought
And not be lyke tyraunttes of Lombardy
That haue no reward but at tyranny
For he that kynge or lorde is natural
Hym ought not be tyraunt ne cruell
As is a fermour, to done the harme he can
He must thynke it is hys liege man
And is hys treasour, and hys golde in coffre
Thys is the sentence of the philosophre
A kynge to kepe hys lieges in iustyce
Wythouten doute that is hys office
All wol he kepe hys lordes in her degre
As it is right and skyll, that they be
Enhaunced and honoured, and most dere
For they ben half goddes, in this world here
Yet mote he done both right to pore & ryche
All be that her estate be not both lyche
And haue of poore folke compassyon
For lo, the gentell kynde of the lyon
For when a flye offendeth hym or byteth
He wyth hys tayle awaye the flye smyteth
All easely, for of hys gentrye
Hym deyneth not to wreke hym on a flye
As doth a curre, or els another beest
In noble corage ought ben arrest
And wayen euery thynge by equite
And euer haue regarde vnto his owne degre
For syr, it is no maystrye for a lorde
To dampne a mā, without answere of word
And for a lorde, that is full foule to vse

And if so be, he may him nat excuse
But asketh mercy with a dredefull herte
And preferreth hym, right in hys bare sherte
To ben ryght at your owne iugement
Than ought a god by shorte auysement
Consydre his owne honour and his trespace
For sythe no cause of dethe lyeth in thys cace
You ought to ben the lighter mercyable
Leteth your ire, and bethe somwhat tretable
The man hath serued you of hys cunninges
And forthred wel your law in his makinges
All be it that he can nat well endyte
Yet hath he made leude folke delyte
To serue you, in preysyng of your name
He made the boke, þ̄ hight the house of Fame
And eke the dethe of Blaunche the duchesse
And the Parlyment of Foules, as I gesse
And all the loue of Palamon and Arcyte
Of Thebes, though the storie is knowē lyte
And many an hympne, for your holydaues
That bryghten balades, roundels, virelayes
And for to speke of other holynesse
He hath in prose translated Boece
And made the lyfe also of saynt Cecyle
He made also, gone is a great whyle
Origenes vpon the Maudelayne
Hym ought nowe to haue the lesse payne
He hath made many a ley, and many a thyng
Nowe as ye be a god, and eke a kyng
For your alcestr, whylom quene of Trace
Aske you this man right of your grace
That ye hym neuer hurte in all hys lyue
And he shall swearen to you, and that bityue
He shall neuer more agylten in thys wyse
But shall maken as ye woll deuyse
Of women trewe in louyng all her lyfe
Where so ye woll, of mayden or of wyfe
And forthren you, as moche as he mulleyde
Or in the Rose, or elis in Creseyde
The god of Loue answerd her thus anon
Madame (q̄ he) it is so longe agon
That I you knewe, so charitable and trew
That neuer yet, sens the worlde was new
To me ne founde I better none than ye
If that I woll saue my degree
I may nor wol nat werne your requeste
All lyeth in you, dothe wyth hym as you leste
I all forgeue without en lenger space
For who so geueth a yefte or dothe a grace
Do it be tyme, hys thanke shall be the more
And demeth ye what he shall do therfore
Go thanke nowe my lady here (q̄ he)
I rose, and down I sette me on my kne
And sayd thus: Madame, the god above
For yelde you that the god of Loue
Haue maked me hys wrathe to forgeue
And grace so longe for to lyue
That I may knowe fothly what ye be
That haue me holpen, and put in this degre
But trewly I wende, as in this cass
Nought haue agylte, ne done to loue trespas
For why, a trewe man without en drede
Hath nat to parten wyth a theues dede
Ne a trewe louer ought me nat to blame
Though that I spede a false louer sōe shame
They ought rather with me for to holde
For that I of Creseyde wrote or tolde
Or of the Rose, what so myne authour mant
Al gate god wotte it was myne entent
To forthren trouth in loue, and it cherysce
And to ben ware fro falsnesse and fro vyce
By whiche ensample, this was my menyng
And she answerd, let be thyne arguyng
For loue ne will nat counterpleted be
In right ne wronge, and lerne that of me
Thou haste thy grace, and holde þ̄ right therto
Now wol I sayn what penaunce þ̄ shalt do
For thy trespace, vnderstonde it here
Thou shalt while þ̄ thou lyuest pereby yere
The moste partie of thy tyme spende
In makyng of a glorious legende
Of good women, maydens, and wyues
That weren trewe in louyng all her lyues
And tell of false men that hem betrayen
That all her lyfe ne do nat but assayen
Howe many women they may done a shame
For in your worlde that is now hold a game
And though the lyke nat a louer be
Spekē wel of loue, this penaunce yeue I the
And to the god of loue I shall so praye
That he shal charge his seruātes by any way
To forthseren the, and well thy labour quyte
Go nowe thy way, this penaunce is but lyte
And whā this boke is made, yeue it þ̄ quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene
The god of loue gan vanyshe, and than he sayd
Wost thou (q̄ he) wher thrōde wyfe or mayde
Or quene, or countesse, or of what degre
That hath so lyteli penaunce geuen the
That haste deserued sore for to smerte
But pyte renneth sone in gentyll herte
That mayst þ̄ sene, she knoweth what she is
And I answerde, nay syr so haue I blys
No more, but that I se well she is good
That is

That is a trewe tale by myne hoode
(q Loue) and thou knowest well parde
If it be so that thou auyse the
Haste thou nat in a booke in thy cheste
The great goodnesse of the quene Alceste
That turned was in to a dayesye
She that for her husbonde chese to dye
And ete to gone to hell, rather than he
And Hercules rescued her parde
And brought her out of hell agayne to blys
And I answerde agayne, and sayd yes
Nowe knowe I her, & is thys good Alceste
The dayesye, and myne owne hertes reste
Nowe fele I wel the goodnesse of this wyfe
That bothe after her dethe, and in her lyfe
Her great bountie doubleth her renoun
Well hath she qurt me myne affection
That I haue to her floure the dayesye
No wonder is though Ioue her stellyfye
As telleth Agaton for her great goodnesse
Her whyte corowne beareth of it wytnesse
For also many vertues had she
As smale floroums in her corowne be
In remembraunce of her, and in honour
Cibylla made the dayesy and the flour
Icrowned a[illegible]rth white, as men may se
And Mars yaue to her a corown reed parde
In stede of Rubies set amonge the white
Therwith this quene wor red for shde a lyte
Whan she was prayfed so in her presence
Than sayd Loue, a full great negligence
Was it to the, that vlke tyme thou made
(Pyde Absolon thy tresses in balade
That thou forgete her in thy songe to sette
Sythe that thou arte so greatly in her dette
And woste well that kalender is she
To any woman, that wol louer be
For she taught all the crafte of trewe louyng
And namely of the wyfehode the lyueng
And all the boundes that she ought kepe
Thy lytell wytte was thylke tyme a slepe
But nowe I charge the vpon thy lyfe
That in thy Legend thou make of this wyfe
Whan thou haste other smale ymade before
And fare nowe well, I charge the no more
But er I go, thus moche I wol the tell
Ne shall no trewe louer come in hell
These other ladyes syttynge here a rowe
Ben in my balade, yf thou const hem knowe
And in thy bokes, all thou shalt hem fynde
Haue hem nowe in thy legende all in mynde
I meane of hem that ben in thy knowyng
For here ben twenty thousande mo syttyng
Than thou knowest, good women all
And trewe of loue, for aught that may befall
Make the metres of hem as the lest
I mote gon home, the sunne draweth west
To paradys, wyth all this companye
And serue alway the freshe dayesye
At Cleopatras I woll that thou begynne
And so forthe, & my loue so shalt thou wynne
For let se nowe what man that louer be
Wol done so stronge a payne for loue as she
I wote wel that thou mayste nat al it tynne
That suche louers dyd in her tynne
It were to longe to reden and to here
Suffyseth me thou make in thys manere
That thou reherce of all her lyfe the great
After these olde authours lysten for to treate
For who so shall so many a storye tel
Sey shortely or he shall to longe dwel
And with that worde my bokes gan I take
And ryght thus on my legende gan I make.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue.

¶ Here begynneth the legende of Cleopatras quene of Egypt.

After the dethe of Ptholome the kyng
That al Egypt had in his gouernyng
Reigned hys quene Cleopatras
Tyl on a tyme byfell there suche a caas
That out of Rome was sent a senatour
For to conqueren realmes and honour
Unto the towne of Rome, as was vsaunce
To haue the worlde at her obeysaunce
And sothe to say, Antonius was his name
So fyl it, as fortune hym ought a shame
Whan he was fallen in prosperyte
Rebell vnto the towne of Rome is he
And ouer all thys the fustes of Cesare
He lefte her fully, er that she was ware
And wolde algates han another wyfe
For which he toke with Rome & Cesar stryfe
Natheless, for sothe this vlke senatour
Was a ful worthy gentyll werryour
And of hys dethe it was full great domage

But loue had brought this mā in ſuch a rage
And him ſo narowe bounden in hys laas
And all for the loue of Cleopatras
That all the worlde he ſette at no value
Hym thouȝt ther was nothyng to him ſo due
As Cleopatras, for to loue and ſerue
Hym thought that in armes for to ſterue
In the defence of her, and of her right
This noble quene, ek loued ſo this knight
Through his deſerte, and for his chyualrye
As certaynly, but yf that bookes lye
He was of perſon, and of gentylneſſe
And of diſcretion, and of hardyneſſe
Worthy to any wight that lyuen may
And ſhe was fayre, as is the roſe in May
And for to maken ſhorte is the beſte
She wore his wyfe, and had him as her leſte
The weddyng and the feeſt to deuyſe
To me that haue ytake ſuche emprile
And ſo many a ſtorye for to make
It were to longe, leſte that I ſhulde ſlake
Of thyng that beareth more effecte and charge
For men may ouerlade a ſhyp or barge
And for thy, to effecte than woll I ſkyppe
And all the remenaunt, I woll let it ſtyppe
Octauian, that woode was of this dede
Shope him an hooſte on Antony to lede
All vtterly, for hys diſtruction
Wyth ſtoute romaynes, cruell as lyon
To ſhyp they went, and thus I let hem ſayle
Antonius was ware, and woll nat fayle
To meten with theſe romaynes, yf he may
Take ek hys rede, and bothe vpon a day
Hys wyfe and he, and all his hoſte forth wente
To ſhyp anon, no lenger they ne ſtente
And in the ſee it happed hem to mete
Up goth the trumpe, and for to ſhoute and ſhete
And paynen hem to ſette on with the ſonne
Wyth griſly ſowne, out goth the great gonne
And hertely they hurtlen in al at ones
And fro þ toppe, down cometh þ gret ſtones
In gothe the grapenell ſo full of crokes
Amonge the ropes ran the ſherryng hokes
In wyth the polaxe preaſeth he and he
Behynde the maſte, begynneth he to flye
And out agayne, and driueth hem ouer borde
He ſtyrcketh hym vpon hys ſpeares orde
He rente the ſayle with hokes lyke a ſythe
He bringeth þ cuppe, and bydeth hem be blyth
He poureth peeſen vpon the hatches ſlyder
Wyth pottes full of lyme, they gone to gyder
And thus the longe day in fyghte they ſpende
Tyll at the laſte, as euery thyng hath ende
Antony is ſhent, and put hym to the flyghte
And all his folke to go, that beſt go myghte
Fleeth ek the quene, withal her purpre ſayle
For ſtrokes, which þ went as thicke as hayle
No wonder was, ſhe might it nat endure
And whan that Antony ſawe þ auenture
Alas (q he) the day that I was borne
Thus worſhyp in thys day thus haue I lorne
And for diſpayre, out of hys wytte he ſterte
And roſe hym ſelfe anon throughout þ herte
Er that he ferther went out of the place
His wyfe, that couthe of Ceſar haue no grace
To Egypte is fled, for drede and for diſtreſſe
But herkeneth ye that ſpeken of kyndeneſſe
Ye men that falſly ſwearen many an othe
That ye wol dye, yf that your loue be wroth
Here may ye ſene of women ſuche a trouth
This woful Cleopatre hath made ſuch routh
That there nys tonge none that may it tell
But on the morowe ſhe wol no lenger dwell
But made her ſubtyll werkmē make a ſhrine
Of all the rubyes and the ſtones fyne
In all Egypte, that ſhe couthe eſpye
And put ful the ſhrine of ſpycerie
And let þ corſe embaume, and forthe ſhe fette
This dead corſe, and in the ſhrine it ſhette
And nere the ſhrine a pyt than doth ſhe graue
And all the ſerpentes that ſhe might haue
She put hem in that graue, and thus ſhe ſeyde
Now loue, to whō my ſorouful hert obeyde
So ferforthly, that fro that dyſtull houre
That I you ſwore, to ben all freely your
I meane you, Antonius my knyght
That neuer wakyng in the day or nyght
Ye were out of myn hertes remembraunce
For well or wo for carole, or for daunce
And in my ſelfe, this couenaunt made I tho
That ryght ſuche as ye feiten wele or wo
As ferforthe as it in my power laye
Vnreproueable vnto my wyfehod aye
The ſame wolde I feien, lyfe or dethe
And thilke couenaut, whyle me laſteth breth
I woll fulfyl, and that ſhall well be ſene
Was neuer vnto her loue a trewer quene
And with þ word, naked with ful good herte
Amonge the ſerpentes in the pytte ſhe ſterte
And there ſhe cheſe to haue her buryeng
Anon the neddres gonne her for to ſtynge
And ſhe her dethe receyueth with good chere
For loue of Antony that was her ſo dere
And this is ſtoryall, ſothe it is no fable

Now

Now er I fynde a mā thus trewe & stable
And woll for loue hys death so frely take
I praye god let our heades neuer ake.

Here endeth the legende of Cleopatras, and here folowed the legende of Tisbe of Babilon.

AT Babylon whylom fell it thus
The whych towne the quene Semyramus
Let dychen all aboute, and walles make
full hye, of harde tyles well ybake
There were dwellynge in thys noble towne
Two lordes, which ỳ were of great renown
And woneden so nygh vpon a grene
That ther nas but a stone wal hem betwene
As ofte in great townes is the wonne
And soth to sayne, ỳ one man had a sonne
Of all that lande, one of the lustyest
That other had a doughter, the fayrest
That eastward in ỳ world was tho dwellig
The name of euerych, gan to other spryng
By women that were neyghbours aboute
For in that countrey yet wythouten doute
Wardens ben ykept for ielousye
full streyte, lest they dydden some folye
Thys yonge man was cleped Piramus
Tisbe hyght the mayde (Naso sayeth thus)
And thus by reporte, was her name yknowe
That as they were in age, so were her loue
And certayne, as by reason of her age
There might haue ben bitwixt hem marriage
But that her fathers nolde it not assente
And both in loue vlyke sore they brente
That none of all her frendes myght it lette
But priuely somtyme yet they mette
By sleyght, and spaken some of her desyre
As wyse the glede, and hotter is the fyre
Forbrd a loue, and it is ten tymes so wode
Thus wal, which ỳ betwixt hem both stode
was clouen a two, right fro the toppe adoun
Of olde tyme, of hys foundacion
But yet this clyfte was so narowe and lyte
It was not sene, here ynough a myte
But what is that, that loue can not espye
Ye louers two, yf that I shall not lye
Pr founden fyrst thys lytell narowe clyfte
And wyth a sounde, as softe as any shryfte
They let her wordes through the clyfte pace
And tolden, whyle ỳ they stoden in the place
All her complaynt of loue, and all her wo
At euery tyme when they durst so
On that one syde of the wall stode he
And on that other syde stode Tysbe
The swete sowne of other to receyue
And thus her wardeyns wold they dysceyue
And euery daye thys wall they wolde threte
And wyshe to god, that it were downe ybete
Thus wold they sayne, alas ỳ wycked wall
Through thyne enuye thou vs lettest all
why nyl thou cleaue, or fallen all a two
Or at the leest, but thou woldest so
Yet woldest thou but ones let vs mete
Or ones that we myght kyssen swete
Then were we cured of our cares colde
But natheless, yet be we to the holde
In as moche as thou suffrest for to gone
Our wordes through thy lyme yche thy stone
Yet ought we wyth the ben well apayde
And when these ydell wordes weren sayd
The colde wall they wollen kysse of stone
And take her leaue, & forth they wolde gone
And thys was gladly in the euentyde
Or wonder early, lest men it espyde
And lege tyme they wrought in thys maner
Tyl on a daye, when Phebus gan to clere
Aurora wyth the stremes of her hete
Had dryed vp the dewe of herbes wete
Vnto thys clyfte, as it was wonte to be
Come Piramus, and after come Tisbe
And plyghten trouth, fully in her fay
That ylke same nyght to stele away
And to begyle her wardeyns euerychone
And forth out of the cyte for to gone
And for the feldes ben so brode and wyde
For to mete in o place at o tyde
They set markes, her metynges shulde be
There kynge Ninus was graue, vnder a tre
For olde payenms, that ydolles heryed
Vseden tho in feldes to ben buryed
And fast by thys graue was a well
And shortly of thys tale for to tell
Thys couenaunt was affyrmed wonder fast
And longe hem thought that the sunne last
That it were gone vnder the see adoun
Thys Tisbe hath so great affectioun
And so great lykynge Piramus to se
That when she sawe her tyme myght be
At nyght she stale awaye full priuely

wyth her face ywympled lubtelly
For all her frendes (for to saue her trouth)
She hath forsake alas, and that is routhe
That euer woman wolde be so trewe
To trusten man, but she the bet hym knewe
And to the tree she goeth a full good pace
For loue made her so hardy in thys case
And by the well, adowne she gan her dresse
Alas, then cometh a wylde lyonesse
Out of the wodde, wythouten more areest
Wyth bloody mouth, of strangelyng of a beest
To drynken of the well there as she sat
And when that Tisby had espyed that
She rysl her vp, wyth a full dery herte
And in a caue, wyth dredfull foote she sterte
For by the moone she sawe it well wythall
And as she ran, her wymple let she fall
And toke no hede, so sore she was a whaped
And eke so glad that she was escaped
And thus she sate, and lurketh wonder styll
When that thys lyonesse hath dronke her fyll
Aboute the well gan she for to wynde
And ryght anone the wymple gan she fynde
And wyth her blody mouth it all to rente
When thys was done, no lenger she ne stente
But to ꝑ wodde her way she hath she nome

And at the last thys Piramus is come
But all to longe alas at home was he
The moone shone, men myght well se
And in hys way, as that he come full faste
Hys eyen to the grounde adowne he caste
And in the sonde, as he beheld adoun
He sawe the steppes brode of a lyoun
And in hys herte he sodeynly agrose
And pale he wexte, therwyth hys herte arose
And nere he came, & foude the wymple torne
Alas quod he the daye that I was borne
Thys o myght well both vs louers slee
Howe shulde I asken mercy of Tisbee
When I am he that haue you slayne, alas
Wy byddynge hath you slayne in thys caas
Alas, to bydde a woman gone by myght
In place there as perill fallen myght
And I so slowe, alas I ne had be
Here in thys place, a furlonge way er ye
Nowe what lyoun that is in thys forestе
Wy body mote he rente, or what beste
That wylde is, gnawen mote he myne herte
And with that worde, he to ꝑ wymple sterte
And kyst it ofte, and wept on it full sore
And sayd wymple alas, there nys nomore
But thou shalt sele as well the bloode of me
As thou haste seke the bledynge of Tisbe
And wyth ꝑ worde, he smote hym to ꝑ herte
The bloode out of the woũde as brode sterte
As water, when the conduyt broken is

Nowe Tisbe, whych that wyst not thys
But syttynge in her drede, she thought thus
Yf it so fall that my Piramus
Be comen hether, and may me not yfynde
He may me holden false, and eke vnkynde
And out she cometh, & after hym gan espyen
Both wyth her herte, and wyth her eyen
And thought, I woll hym tellen of my drede
Both of the lyonesse and of my dede
And at the laste her lone then hath she founde
Beatynge wyth hys heeles on the grounde
All blody, and therwythall aback she sterte
And lyke the mawes quappe gan her herte
And pale as box she wore, and in a throwe
Turned her, and gan hym well to knowe
That it was Piramus her herte dere
who couldе wryte whych a deedly chere
Hath Tisbe nowe, & how her herte she rente
And howe she gan her selfe to turmente
And how she lyeth & swowneth on ꝑ grounde
And how she wept of teeres full his woũde
How medleth she his bloode, th her coplaint
How th his bloode, her seluen gan she paint
Howe clypped she the deed corse, alas
Howe doth thys wofull Tisbe in thys caas
Howe kysseth she hys frosty mouthe so colde
who hath don this, & who hath ben so bolde
To sleen my lefe, o speake Piramus
I am thy Tisbe, that the calleth thus
And therwythall she lyfteth vp hys heed

Thys wofull mã, that was not fully deed
when that he herde the name of Tisbe crye
On her he cast hys heuy deedly eyen
And downe agayne, & yeldeth vp the goost

Tisbe rysl vp, wythout noyse or boost
And sawe her wymple and hys empty sheth
And eke hys swerde, ꝑ hym hath don to deth
Then spake she thus, thy wofull hãde (q she)
Is stronge ynough in such a werke to me
For loue shall yeue me strength & hardynesse
To make my woũde large ynough I gesse
I woll the folowen deed, and I woll be
Felowe, and cause eke of thy dethe (q she)
And though ꝑ nothynge saue the deth only
Wyght the fro me departe truely
Thou shalt no more departe nowe fro me
Then fro the deth, for I woll go wyth the
And nowe ye wretched lelouse fathers ont

we

We that weren whylom chyldren your
We prayen you, wythouten more enuye
That in o graue we moten lye
Sens loue hath brought vs this pitous end
And ryghtwyse God, to euery louer send
That loueth truly more prosperite
Then euer had Piramus and Tisbe
And let no gentyll woman her assure
To putten her in suche an auenture
But god forbyd but a woman can
Ben as trewe and louynge as a man
And for my parte, I shall anone it kyth
And wyth ꝑ word, his swerd she toke swyth
That warme was of her loues blode, & hote
And to the herte she her seluen smote
And thus are Tisbe and Piramus ygo
Of trewe men I fynde but fewe mo
In all my bokes, saue thys Piramus
And therfore haue I spoken of hym thus
For it is deynte to vs men to fynde
A man that can in loue be trewe and kynde
Here maye ye sene, what louer so he be
A woman dare, and can as well as he.

Here endeth the legende of Tysbe of Babilon, and here folowth the legende of Dido quene of Cartage.

Glorie and honoure Virgyle
Mantuan
Be to thy name, and I shall as
I can
Folowe thy lanterne, as thou goest byforne
Howe Eneas to Dido was forswore
In thyne Eneyde, and Naso will I take
The tenour and the great effectes make
When Troye brought was to dystruction
By grekes sleyght, and namely by Synon
Farynge the horse offred vnto Minerue
Through which ꝑ many a troyã must sterue
And Hector had after hys death apered
And fyre so wode, it myght not ben sterred
In all the noble toure of Ilion
That of the cytie was the chefe dongeon
And all the countre was so lowe ybrought
And Priamus the kynge fordone & nought
And Eneas was charged by Venus
To flyen awaye, he toke Ascanius
That was his son, in his right hãde & fledde
And on hys backe he bare, & wyth hym ledde
His olde father, cleped Anchyses
And by the way hys wyfe Creusa he lees
And moche sorowe had he in hys mynde
Er that he coulde his felawshyp fynde
But at the laste, whan he had hem founde
He made hym redy, in a certayne stounde
And to the see ful faste he gan hym hye
And sayleth forthe, with all hys companye
Towarde Italye, as wolde destynee
But of his auentures in the see
Nys nat to purpose for to speke of here
For it acordeth nat to my matere
But as I sayd, of hym and of Dido
Shall be my tale, tyll that I haue do
So longe he sayled in the salte see
Tyll in Libye vnneth arryued he
So was he wyth the tempest all to shake
And whan that he the hauen had ytake
He had a knight was called Achates
And hym of all hys felawshyp he ches
To gone wyth hym, the countrey for tespye
He toke wyth hym nomore companye
But forth they gone, & lette his shyppes ryde
Hys feere and he, wythouten any gyde
So longe he walketh in this wyldernesse
Tyll at the laste he mette an hunteresse
A bowe in honde, and arowes had she
Her clothes cutted were vnto the knee
But she was yet the fayrest creature
That euer was yformed by nature
And Eneas and Achates she grette
And thus she to hem spake, whã he hẽ mette
Sawe ye (ꝙ she) as ye han walked wyde
Any of my sustren walke you besyde
Wyth any wylde bore, or other beest
That they haue hunted to in this forest
Itucked vp, wyth arowes in her caas
Nay sothly lady (ꝙ this Eneas)
But by thy beautie, as it thynketh me
Thou myghtest neuer erthely woman be
But Phebus suster art thou, as I gesse
And yf so be that thou be a goddesse
Haue mercy on our labour and our wo
I nam no goddesse sothly (ꝙ she) tho
For maydens walken in this countre here
wyth arowes & with bowe, in this manere
This is the realme of Libye, there ye bene
Of whiche that Dido lady is and quene
And shortly tolde all the occasyon
Why Dido came in to that regyon
Of whyche as nowe me lysteth nat to ryme

It nedeth

It nedeth not, it neve but lolle of tyme
For thys is all and some, it was Venus
Hys owne mother, ꝑ spake wyth hym thus
And to Cartage she bad he shulde him dyght
And vanysshed anone out of hys syght
I coulde folowe worde for worde Vergyle
But it wolde lasten all to longe whyle
Thys noble quene that clypped was Dido
That whylom was the wyfe of Sithes
That layter was then the bryght sonne
This noble towne of Cartage hath begonne
In whych she raygneth in so great honour
That she was holde of all queues flour
Of gentylesse, of fredome, and of beautee
That well was hym that myght ones see
Of kynges and lordes so desyred
That all ꝑ worlde her beauty had yfyred
She stode so well in euery wyghtes grace
when Eneas was come vnto the place
Unto the mayster temple of all the toun
There Dido was in her deuocioun
Full pitiuely hys waye then hath he nome
when he was in the large temple come
I can not sayne, yf that it be possyble
But Venus had hym maked inuisible
Thus sayeth the boke wythouten any lees
And when thys Eneas and Achates
Habben in thys temple ben ouer all
Then founde they depaynted on a wall
Howe Troye and al the lade dystroyed was
Alas that I was boune (quod Eneas)
Through ꝑ worlde our shame is kyd so wyde
Nowe it is paynted on euery syde
we that weren in prosperite
Ben nowe dysclaundred, and in suche degre
No lenger for to lyuen I ne kepe
And wyth ꝑ worde, he brast out for to wepe
So tenderly, that routhe it was to sene
Thys freshe lady of the eyte quene
Stode in the temple, in her estate royall
So rychely, and eke so fayre wyth all
So yonge, so lusty, wyth her eyen glade
That yf that god, that heuen & earth made
wolde haue a loue, for beauty and goodnesse
And womanhood, troth, and semelynesse
whom shulde he louen, but thys lady swete
There nys no woman to hym halfe so mete
Fortune, that hath the worlde in gouernaūce
Hath sodaynly brought in so newe a chaunce
That neuer was there yet so frened a caas
For all the company of Eneas
wherych we wende haue lorne in the see
Armed is nought ferre fro that eyte
For wherych the greatest of hys lordes, some
By auenture ben to the eyte come
Unto the same temple for to sene
The quene, and of her socour her besene
Such renōe was there spoke of her goodnesse
And when they had tolde all her dystresse
And all her tempest and all her harde cas
Unto the quene appered Eneas
And openly beknewe that it was he
who had lore them, but thys meyne
That hadde folde her lorde, her gouernour
The quene sawe they dyd him such honour
And had herden ofte of Eneas, er tho
And in her herte had routh and wo
That euer suche a noble man as he
Shall ben dysherited in suche degre
And sawe ꝑ man, ꝑ he was lyke a knyght
And sufficyaunt of persone and of myght
And lyke to ben a dere gentylman
And well hys wordes he bestrte can
And had a noble vysage for the nones
And formed well of braune and of bones
And after Venus, had suche fayrnesse
That no mā myght be halfe so fayre I gesse
And well a lorde hym semed for to be
And for he was a straunger, somwhat she
Lyked hym the bette, as god do boote
To some folke, often newe thynge is swote
Anone her herte hath pyte of hys wo
And wyth pyte, loue came also
And thus for pyte and for gentylnesse
Refreshed must he ben of hys dystresse
She sayde: certes, that she sory was
That he hath had such peryl and such caas
And in her frendly speche, in thys maner
She to hym spake, and sayd as ye may here.
Be ye not Venus sonne and Anchyses
In good fayth, all the worshyp and encres
That I maye goodly done you, ye shall haue
Your shyppes and your meyne shall I saue
And many a gentyll worde she spake hym to
And commaunded her messangers to go
The same daye wythouten any fayle
Hys shyppes for to sene, and hem vytayle
Full many a beest she to the shyppes sent
And wyth the wyne she gan hem to present
And to her royall paleys she her spedde
And Eneas alwaye wyth her she ledde
what nedeth you the feestes to dyscryue
He neuer better at ease was in hys lyue
Full was the feest of deyntes and rychesse

N

Of instrumentes of songe, and of gladnesse
And many an amorous lokynge and deuyse
Thys Eneas is come to paradyse
Out of the swolowe of hell, and thus in ioye
Remembreth hym of hys estate in Troye
To daunceynge chãbres ful of paramentes
Of ryche bedders, and of pauementes
Thys Eneas is ledde after the meete
And wyth the quene when that he had sete
And spyces parted, and the wyne agone
Unto hys chambre was he ladde anone
To take hys ease, and for to haue hys reste
wyth all hys folke, to done what so hem leste
There nas courser well yborydled none
Ne stede for the iustynge well to gone
Ne large palfrey, easy for the nones
Ne towell fret full of ryche stones
Ne iackes full of golde, of large wyght
Ne ruby none that shyneth by nyght
Ne gentyll hauten faukon heronere
Ne hounde for herte, wylde boze, or dere
Ne cuppe of golde, wyth floreyns newe ybet
That in the lande of Libye may ben gette
That Dido ne hath it Eneas ysent
And all is payed, what that he hath spent
Thus ca this honorable quene her gestes cal
As she that can in fredome passen al
Eneas forthey eke, wythoute lees
Hath sent to hys shyppe by Achates
After hys sonne, and after ryche thynges
Both sceptre, clothes, broches, & eke rynges
Some for to weare, and some to presente
To her, that al these noble thinges hym sent
And bad his sonne howe that he should make
The presentynge, and to the quene it take
Repayred is thys Achates agayne
And Eneas full blyssfull is and fayne
To sene hys yonge sonne Ascanyus
For to hym it was reported thus
That Cupido, that is the god of loue
At prayer of hys mother hye aboue
And the lykenesse of the chylde yrake
Thys noble quene enamoured for to make
On Eneas, but of that scripture
Be as be maye, I make of it no cure
But soth is thys, ỹ quene hath made suche
Unto this child, that wonder is to here (chere
And of the presente that hys father sent
She thanked hym ofte in good entent
Thus is thys quene in pleasaunce & ioye
wyth all these newe lusty folke of Troye
And of the dedes hath she more enquyred
Of Eneas, and all the storye lered
Of Troye, and all the longe day they twey
Entendeden for to speke and for to play
Of whych there gan to breden suche a fyre
That sely Dido hath nowe suche desyre
wyth Eneas her newe geste to deale
That she loste her hewe and eke her heale
Nowe to the effecte, nowe to the frute of all
why I haue tolde thys storye, and telle shall
Thus I begynne, it fell vpon a nyght
when that the moone vpreysed had her lyght
Thys noble quene vnto her reste wente
She syghyth sore, & gon her selfe turmente
She waketh, waloweth, & mademany braid
As done these louers, as I haue herde sayd
And at the laste, vnto her suster Anne
She made her mone, & thus spak she thã
Nowe dere suster myne, what may it be
That me agasteth in my dreme (quod she)
Thys ylke newe troyan is so in my thought
For that me thynketh he is so wel ywrought
And eke so lykely to ben a man
And therwyth so mykell good he can
That al my loue and lyte lyeth in hys cure
Haue ye not herde hym tell hys auenture?
Nowe certes Anne, yf that ye rede me
I woll fayne to hym ywedded be
Thys is ỹ effecte, what shulde I more seyne
In hym lyeth all, to do my lyue or deyne
Her suster Anne, as she ỹ coulde her good
Said as her thought, & somdele it withstode
But here of was so longe a sermonynge
It were to longe to make rehersynge
But fynally, it maye not be withstonde
Loue woll loue, for no wyght wol it wonde
The dawnynge vp ryst, out of the see
Thys amerous quene chargeth her meyne
The nettes dresse, and speares brode & kene
An huntynge woll thys lusty freshe quene
So prycketh her thys newe ioly wo
To horse is all her lusty folke ygo
Unto the court the hounder ben ybrought
And vp on courser swyfte as any thought
Her yonge knyghtes heuen all aboute
And of her women eke an huge route
Upon a thycke palfraye, paper whyte
wyth sadell reed, embrouded wyth delyte
Of golde the barres, vp enbossed hygh
Sate Dido, all in golde and perrey wrygh
And she is fayre, as is the bryght morowe
That healeth fycke folkes of nyghtes sorow
Upon a courser, startlynge as the fyre

Then

Men myght turne hym wyth a lytell wyle
But Eneas, lyke Phebus to deuyse
So was he freshe arayed in hys wyse
The lusty brydell, wyth the bytte of golde
Gouerneth he ryght as hym self hath wolde
And forth, thys noble queue, thys lady ryde
On huntynge, wyth thys troyan by her syde
The heerde of hartes, founden is anone
With hey gobet, pryche thou, let gon, let gone
Why nyll the lyon comen or the beare
That I might hym ones mete wh this speare
Thus sayne this yonge folke, & up they kyll
The wylde harters, & haue hem at her wyll
Amonge al thys, to combien gan the heuen
The thonder rored wyth a grysly steuen
Downe come ꝑ rayne, wh hayle & slet so faste
Wyth heuens fyre, that made so sore agaste
Thys noble queue, and also her meyne
That eche of hem was glad away to flye
And shortly fro the tempest her to saue
She fled her selfe, into a lytell caue
And wyth her went thys Eneas also
I not wyth hem yf there went any mo
The autoure maketh of it no mencion
And here began the depe affection
Bytwixt hem two thus was ꝑ fyrst morowe
Of her gladnesse, & grymmyng of her sorowe
For there hath Eneas ryueled so
And to her all hys hurte and all hys wo
And swore so depe to her to be trewe
For well or wo, and chaunge for no newe
And as a false louer, so well can playne
That fely Dido rewed on hys payne
And toke hym for husbonde, & became his wife
For euer more, whyle that hem laste lyfe
And after thys, when ꝑ the tempest steute
With myrth out as they came, home they wet
The wycked fame vp rose, and that anone
Howe Eneas hath wyth the queue ygone
In to the caue, and demed as hem leste
And when ꝑ kyng ꝑ Farbas hyght it wyst
As he that had her loued euer hys lyfe
And wowed her to haue to hys wyfe
Such sorow as he hath maked, & suche chere
It is a ruthe and pyte for to here
But as in loue, alday it happeth so
That one shall laughen at anothers wo
Howe laugheth Eneas, and is in ioye
And more richesse, then euer was in Troye
O fely woman, full of innocence
Full of pyte, of truthe, and conuynence
What maked you to men to trusten so
Haue ye such routh vpon her fayned wo
And haue suche olde ensamples you before
Se ye not all howe they ben forsworne
Where se ye one, that he ne hath lafte his lefe
Or ben vnkynde, or done her some myschefe
Or pylled her, or bosted of hys dede
Ye maye as well it sene, as ye may rede
Take hede nowe of thys great gentryman
Thys troyan that so well her pleasse can
That fayneth hym so trewe and obeysynge
So gentyll, and so pleuy of hys doynge
And can so well done all hys obeysaunce
To her, at festes and at daunce
And whe she goeth to temple, & home ageine
And fasten tyll he hath hys lady seyne
And beaten in hys deuyses for her sake
Not I not what, and songes wolde he make
Iusten, and done of armes many thynges
Sende her letters, tokens, brooches, & rynges
Now herkneth howe he shal his lady serue
There as he was in perryll for to sterue
For honger and for myschefe in the see
And desolate, and fledde fro hys countree
And all hys folke wyth tempest al to dryuen
She hath her body & eke her realme yeuen
In to hys honde, there she myght haue bene
Of other lande then of Cartage a quene
And lyued ioy enough, what wold ye more
Thys Eneas, that hath thus depe yswore
Is wery of hys crafte wythin a throwe
The hote ernest is all ouerblowe
And priuely he doth hys shyppes dyght
And shapeth hym to steale away by nyght
Thys Dido hath suspection of thys
And thought well that it was all amys
For in hys bedde he lyeth a nyght and syketh
She asketh hym anone, what hym mysseth
My dere herte, whych that I loue moste
Certes (q he) thys nyght my fathers goste
Hath in my slepe, me so sore turmented
And eke marcury his message hath presented
That nedes to the conquest of Italye
My destyne is soone for to sayle
For which me thinketh, brosté is myne herte
Therwyth hys false teeres out they sterte
And taketh her wythin hys armes two
Is that in ernest, q she, woll ye so
Haue ye not sworne, to wyfe me to take
Alas, what woman woll ye of me make
I am a gentyl woman, and a quene
Ye woll not fro your wyfe thus foule flene
That I was borne alas, what shall I do

To

To tellen in short, this noble quene Dido
She seketh halowes, and doth sacrifyce
She kneleth, creyeth, ꝑ routhe is it to deuyse
Conuerteth hym, and proffreth hym to be
His thral, his seruaút, in the best degree
She falleth hym to foote, & swouneth there
Discheuyle with her bryght gylt heer
And sayth, haue mercy, let me wt you ryde
These lordes, which ꝑ wonnen me beside
Woll me destroyen only for your sake
And ye woll me now to wyf take
As ye haue sworn, thá wol I yeue you leue
To sleen me wt your swerd, now sone at eue
For than yet shall I dyen as your wyfe
I am with childe, & yeue my childe his lyfe
Mercy lorde, haue pytie in your thought
But al this thing auayleth her tyght nought
And as a traytour forth gan to sayle
Towarde the large countree of Itayle
And thus hath he left Dido in wo & pyne
And wedded there a lady hyght Rayne
Anoth he lafte, & eke his swerde stódynge
whan he fro Dido stale in her slepyng
Kyght at her beddes heed, so gan he hye
whan that he stale awaye to his nauye
which cloth, whá sely Dido gan awake
She hath it kyst full oft for his sake
And sayd, o swete cloth, while inpiter it lest
Take my soule, vnbynde me of this vnrest
I haue fulfylled of fortune all the course
And thus alas, withouten his socourse
Twenty tyme ysswouned hath she than
And whan that she vnto her suster Anne
Cõplayned had, of which I may not wryte
So great routh I haue it to endyte
And bad her nource and her sustren gon
To fetchen fyre, and other thynges anon
And sayd that she wolde sacrifye
And whan she myght her tyme wel aspy
Upon the fyre of sacrifyce she sterte
And wt his swerde she rofe her to the hert
But as myn auctor sayth, yet thus she seyd
Or she was hurt, before or she deyed
She wrote a letter anon, and thus began
Kyght so (ꝙ she) as the whyte swan
Ayenst his deth begynneth for to synge
Kyght so to you I make my cõplayninge
Not that I trowe to getten you agayne
For wel I wot it is all in vayne
Syns ꝑ the goddes ben cõtrarious to me
But syn my name is lost thrugh you (ꝙ she)
I may well lese a worde on you or letter
All be it, I shalde neuer the better
For thilke wynde ꝑ blew your shyp away
The same wynde hath blowaway your fay
But whoso wol al this letter haue in minde
Rede Ouyde, and in hym he shal it fynde

Here endeth the legende of Dido quene of Cartage: And here followeth the legend of Hypsiphile and Medea.

THou rote of false louers, duke Jason
Thou sleer, deuourer, and confusion
Of gentle wemen, gentle creatures
Thou madest thy reclayminge & thy lures
To ladyes of thy feathlyche apparaunce
And of thy wordes farsed with pleasaunce
And of thy fayned trouth, and thy manere
Vnth thyne obeysaunce and humble chere
And wt thy countrefayted payne and wo
There other fallen one, thou falsed two
Oft swore thou, that thou woldest dye
For loue, whan thou ne feltest malady
Saue foule delyte, whiche thou callest loue
Ye that I lyue, thy name shalbe shoue
In englysh, that thy disceyte shalbe knowe
Haue at the Jason, now thyne honoure is
But certes it is both routh and wo (blowe
That loue with false louers worketh so
For they shal haue well better loue & chere
Than he that hath bought loue ful dere
Or had in armes many a blody bore
For euer as tender a capon eateth the fore
Though he be false, & hath ꝑ foule betrayde
Is shall the good man ꝑ therfore payde
Although he haue to ꝑ capon skal and right
The false fore wol haue his parte at nyght
On Jason this example is wel yseue
By Hypsiphyle and Medea the quene
In Thessalye, as Ouyde telleth vs
There was a knyght that hyght Pelleus
That had a brother which that hyght Eſó
And whá for age he myght vnethes gon
He yaue to Pelleus the gouernyng
Of al his reygne, & made hym lord & kynge
Of which Eson, this Jason getten was
That in his tyme, and in al ꝑ land there nas
Not suche a famous knyght of gentlenesse
Of fredome, of strength, and of lustynesse
After his fathers death he bare hym so

That there was none that lyst ben his fo
But dyd hym al honour and company
Of which this Pelleus hath great enuy
Imaginyng, that Jason myght be
Enhaunced so, and put in suche degree
with loue of lordes of his regyoun
That frō his reigne, he may be put adoun
And in his wyt a nyght compassed he
How Jason myght best destroyed be
withouten sclaunder of his compasment
And at the last he toke aduysement
That to sendē him into some ferre countrie
There as this Jason may destroyed be
This was his wyt, al made he to Jason
Great chere of loke, and of affectioun
For drede lest his lordes it espyde
So fyll it, as fame renneth wyde
Ther was suche tydyng ouer al, & such loos
That in an yle that called was Colcos
Beyonde Troy est warde in the see
That ther was a ram that men myght se
That had a flees of golde þ shone so bryght
That nowher was ther such another syght
But it was kept alwaye with a dragoun
And many other marualyes vp and doune
And with two bulles maked al of bras
That spyttē fyre, & moche thyng there was
But this was eke the tale nathelees
That whoso wolde wynnen thilke flees
He must both, or he it wynne myght
with the bulles and the dragon fyght
And kynge Otes lorde was of that yle
This Pelleus bethought vpon this wyle
That he his neuewe Jason wolde ethos
To saylen to that londe, him to disport
And sayd, neuewe, yf it myght be
That suche worshyp myght fal the
That thou this famous tresure might win
And bringe it my region within
It were to me great plesaunce and honour
Than were I holde to quyte thy labour
And all the costes I woll my selfe make
And chose what folke thou wolt vp take
Let se now, darst thou taken this vorage
Jason was yonge, and lusty of corage
And vndertoke to done this yike empryse
Anon Argus his shyppes can deuyse
with Jason went the stronge Hercules
And many an other that he with hym ches
But whoso asketh, who is with hym gone
Let hym rede Argonautycon
For he woll tell a tale longe ynough
Philoctetes anon the sayle vp drough
whan the wynde was good, & gan him hye
Out of his countrie, Cailled Thessalye
So longe he sayled in the salt see
Tyll in the yle of Lemnon arryued he
Al be this not rehersed of Guydo
yet sayth Ouyde in his epystles so
And of this yle lady was and quene
The fayre yonge Hypsiphile the shene
That whylom Thoas doughter was the kyng
Hypsiphile was gone in her playing
And romyng on the cleuys by the see
Vnder a banke anon espyed she
where lay the shyp, that Jason gan aryue
Of her goodnesse adowne she sendeth bliue
To weten, yf that any straunge wyght
with tempest thyder wer yblowe anyght
To don hym succour, as was her vsaunce
To furthren euery wyght, & don plesaunce
Of very bounte and of curtesye
This messenger adowne hym gan to hye
And founde Jason and Hercules also
That in a cogge to londe were ygo
Hem to refreshen, and to take the ayre
The morwning attempre was and fayre
And in her way this messenger hem met
Ful cōuingly these lordes two he gret
And dyd his message, asking hem anon
Yf þ they were broken or ought wo begon
Or had nede of lodesmen or victayle
For socour they shulde nothyng fayle
For it was vtterly the quenes wyl
Jason answered meekely and stil
My lady, of he, thanke I hertely
Of her goodnesse, vs nedeth truly
Nothyng as now, but that we were by
And come for to playe out of the see
Tyl that the wynde be better in our way
This lady cometh by the clyffe to play
with her meyne, endlonge the stronde
And fyndeth this Jason, & this other stond
In spekyng of this thyng as I you tolde
This Hercules and Jason gan beholde
Howe þ the quene it was, & fayre her gret
Anon right as they with this lady met
And she toke hede, & knewe by her maniere
By her arraye, by wordes and by chere
That it were gentlemen of great degree
And to the castel with her ledeth she
These straunge folk, & doth hem great honor
And asketh hem of trauayle and of labour
That they haue suffred in the salte see

So

So that within a daye, two or thre
She knewe by the folke þ in his shyppes be
That it was Jason full of renomee
And Hercules that had the great loos
That soughten the auentures of Colcos
And dyd hem honour more than before
And with hem dealed euer longer the more
For they ben worthy folke whouten lees
And namely moost she spake vb Hercules
To hym her hert bace, he shulde be
Mad, wyse, and true of wordes and dede
Whouten any other affection
Of loue, or any other ymagynacion

This Hercules hath this Jason praysed
That to the sun he hath it vp raysed
That half so true a man there nas of loue
Under the cope of heuen that is aboue
And he was wyse, hardy, secret and ryche
Of these .iii. pointes ther nas non him lyche
Of fredome passed he, and lust yhede
All tho that lyuen, or ben deed
Therto so great a gentleman was he
And of Thessalye lykely kynge to be
There nas no let, but that he was agast
To loue, and for to speake shamefast
Hym had leuer hym selfe to murdre & dye
Than that men shulde a louer hym espye
As wolde god that I had tyme
By blood and flesh, so þ I myght lyue
With þ nones, þ he had ought where a wyfe
For his estate, for suche a lusty lyfe
She shulden lede, with this lusty knyght
And al this was cõpassed on the nyght
Betwixt him Jason, & this Hercules
Of these two here was a frendde lees
To come to house vpon an innocent
For to bedote this quene was her entent
And Jason is as coye as is a mayde
He loketh pyteously, but nought he sayd
But freely yaue he to her counsayllers
Feires great, and to her officers
As wolde God I leyser had and tyme
By processe, all his womg for to tyme
But in this house, yf any false louer be
Right as him self now doth, right so did he
With fayning, and vb euery subtyl dede
Ye get nomore of me, but ye wol rede
Thoughnall that telleth all the caas

The soth is this, þ Jason wedded was
Vnto this quene, & toke of her substaunce
What so him lyst vnto his purueyaunce
And vpon her begat chyldren two
And drough his sayle, & saw her neuer mo
A letter sent she hym certayne
Which were to longe to wryten & to sayne
And hym reproueth of his great vntrouth
And prayeth hym on her to haue som routh
And on his chyldren two, she sayd him this
That they be lyke of all thyng ywys
To Jason, saue they couth nat begyle
And prayed god, or it were longe whyle
That she that had his hert yreft her fro
Must fynden hym vntrue also
And that she must both her chyldren spyll
And all tho that suffereth hym his wyll
And true to Jason was she al her lyfe
And euer kept her chaste, as for his wyfe
Ne neuer had she ioy at her hert
But dyed for his loue of sorowes smerte

To Colcos come is this duke Jason
That is of loue deuourer and dragon
As Satyre appeteth forme alway
And from forme to forme it passen may
Or as a well that were botomlesse
Right so can Jason haue no pees
For to desyren through his appetyte
To done with gentyl women his delyte
This is his lust and his felicite
Jason is roomed forth to the cyte
That whylom cleped was Aleucos
That was the master towne of al Colcos
And hath ytolde þ cause of his comyng
Vnto Otes, of that countrey kynge
Praying him þ he must done his affaye
To get the fleese of golde, yf that he may
Of which the kynge assenteth to his boone
And doth hym honour, as it is to doone
So forforth, þ his doughter and his heyre
Medea, which that was so wyse and fayre
That fayrer faugh there neuer man vb eye
He made her done to Jason company
At meate, and syt by hym in the hall

Nowe was Jason a semely man withall
And lyke a lorde, and had a great renoun
And of hi loke as coyall as a lyoun
And goodly of his speche, and familiere
And coude of loue al the craft & arte plenere
Whouten boke, vb euery che obseruaunce
And as fortune her ought a foul mischaunce
She wore enamored vpon this man

Jason, q she, or ough I se or can
As of this thyng, þ which ye ben about
Yea and your selfe I put in moche dout
For whoso woll this auenture atchene

He may nat wele asterten, as I lene
Withouten deth, but I his helpe be
But nathelesse, it is my wyll (q she)
To forthren you, so that ye shall nat dye
But tourneen sound home to your Thessaly
Myn ryght lady (q this Jason) tho
That ye haue of my deth or of my wo
Any regarde, and done me this honour
I wote wel that my myght ne my labour
May nat deserue it in my lyues daye
God thanke you, there I ne can ne may
Your man am I, and lowly you beseche
To ben my helpe, wit houten more speche
But certes for my deth shall I nat spare
Tho gan this Medea to him declare
The peril of this case fro poynt to poynt
Of his battayle, and in what disioynt
He mote stande, of which no creature
Saue only she, ne myght his lyfe assure
And shortly ryght to the poynt for to go
They ben accorded fully betwixe hem two
That Jason shal her wed as true knyght
And terme yset to come soone at nyght
Unto her chambre, and make there his othe
Upon the goddes that he for lese or loth
Ne shulde her neuer falsen nyght ne day
To ben her husbond whyle he lyue may
As he that from his deth hym saued hede
And hereupon at nyght they met yfere
And doth his oth, and goth with her to bed
And on the morowe vpwarde he hym sped
For she hath tauzt him how he shal not fayl
The fleese to wyn, and stynten his battayle
And saued hym his lyfe, and his honour
And gat hym a name as a conquerour
Right through the sleight of her enchaūtmēt
Now hath Jasō the fleese, & home is wēt
With Medea, and treasoures ful great won
But vnwyst of her father she is gone
To Thessaly, with duke Jason her lefe
That afterward hath brouzt her to mischef
For as a traytour he is from her go
And with her left ponge children two
And falsely hath betrayed her, alas
And eurr in loue a cheef traytour he was
And wedded yet the thyrde wyfe anon
That was the doughter of kynge Creon
This is the mede of louynge and guerdon
That Medea receyued of duke Jason
Right for her trouth, and for her kyndnesse
That loued hym better thā her self I gesse
And left her father, and her heritage
And of Jason this is the vassalage
That in his dayes nas neuer none yfounde
So false a louer going on the grounde
And therfore in her letter thus she sayde
First whā she of his falsenesse hym vpbrayd
why lyked me thy yelowe heer to se
More than the bounden of myne honestie
why lyked me thy youth and thy fayrnesse
And of thy tonge, p infinite graciousnesse
O haddest thou in thy conquest deed yhe
Ful myked vntroneth had there dyed vh the
wel can Ouyde her letter in verse endyte
which were as now to longe for to wryte.

¶ Here endeth the legende of Hipsyphile and Medea. And here folowth the legende of Lucresse of Rome.

NOw mote I fayne thertyng of kynges
Of Rome, for her horrible doinges
Of the last kyng Tarquin
As sayth Ouyde (nds
and Tytus Liuius
But for that cause tell I nat this story
But for to prayse, and drawen in memory
The bery wyfe, the bery Lucresse
That for her wyfehode & her stedfastnesse
Nat only that these paynyms her comende
But that cleped is in our legende
The great Austyn, that hath compassioun
Of this Lucrece that starfe in Rome toun
And in what wyse, I wol but shortly treat
And of this thyng I touche but the great
whan Ardea besieged was about
with Romaynes p full sterne were & stout
Full longe lay the siege & lytle wrought ben
So p they wer half ydle as hem thought
And in his play Tarquinius the ponge
Gan for to tape, for he was lyght of tonge
And sayd, that it was an ydle syge
Noman dyd there more than his wyfe
And let vs speake of wyues that is best
Prayse euery man his owne as him lest
And with our speche let vs ease our hert
I knyght that hyght Colatyn vp sterr
And sayd thus, nay syr, it is no nede
To trowen on the worde, but on the dede
I haue a wyfe (q he) that as I trowe
Is holden good of all that euer her knowe

Go we to Rome to nyght, and we shul se
Tarquinius answerd, that lyketh me
To Rome be they come, and fast hem dight
To Colatyns house, and downe they lyght
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatyne
The husbond knewe ꝑ efters well and fyne
And full prively into the house they gone
No: at the gate, porter was there none
And at the chambre doꝛe they abyde
This noble wyfe sat by her beddes syde
Discheueled, foꝛ no malyce she ne thought
And soft wooll sayth Lini that she wrought
To kepen her fro slouth and vdelnesse
And bad her seruauntes done her besynesse
And asketh hem what tydynges heren ye
How sayth men of the siege, how shal it be
God wold the walles were fallen adowne
Syn hu bōd is to longe out of this towne
Foꝛ whi.h drede doth me so to smerte
Right as a sword, it stingeth to myne hert
whan I thynke on this oꝛ of that place
God saue my loꝛd, I pray him foꝛ his grace
And therwithall ful tenderly she gan wepe
And of her werke she toke nomoꝛe kepe
But meekely she let her eyen fall
And thynke semblaunt sate her wel withall
And eke her teares ful of heuynesse
Embelished her wyfely chastnesse
Her countenaunce is to herte digne
Foꝛ they accoꝛded in dede and signe
And with that woꝛde her husbōd Colatin
Of the of hym was ware came sterlyng in
And sayd, drede the nat foꝛ I am here
And she anon vpꝛose with blyssful chere
And kyssed hym, as of wyues is the won
Tarquinius this proude kynges sonne
Conceyued hath her beautye and her chere
Her yelowe heer, her bounte, & her manere
Her hewe, her woꝛdes ꝑ she hath cōplayned
And by no craft her beauty was nat sayned
And caught to this lady suche desyre
That in his hert he brent as any fyre
So woodly, that his wyt was al forgoten
Foꝛ wel thought he she shulde nat be goten
And aye the moꝛe he was in dispayre
The moꝛe coueyteth, and thought her fayre
His blynde lust was all his couetyng
On moꝛowe whā the bryde began to synge
Unto the siege he cōmeth full prively
And by hym selfe he walketh sobrely
The vmage of her recoꝛdyng alway newe
thus lay her heer & thus fresh was her hew
Thus sate, thus span, this was her chere
Thus sayꝛ she was, & this was his manere
All this conceyte his herte hath newe ytake
And as the see, with tempest al to shake
That after whan the stoꝛme is al ago
Yet wol the water quap a day oꝛ two
Right so, though ꝑ her foꝛme were absent
The plesaunce of her foꝛme was present
But nathelesse nat plesaunce, but delyte
Oꝛ an vnryghtfull talent with despyte
Foꝛ maugre her, she shal my lemman be
Hap helpeth hardy man alway (q he)
what ende that I make, it shalbe so
And gyrt hym vꝑ his swerde, & gan to go
And he forth ryght, tyl to Rome he come
And al alone his way that he hath nome
Unto the house of Colatyne ful ryght
Down was ꝑ sun, & day hath lost his light
And in he come, into a pryvy halke
And in the nyght full theuelye can he stalke
whan euery wight was to his rest brought
Ne no wight had of treaso suche a thought
whether by wyndowe, oꝛ by other gyn
with swerde vdrawe thoꝛtly he cometh in
There as she lay this noble wife Lucrece
And as she woke, her bed she felt presse
what beest is that (q she that wayeth thus
I am the kynges sonne Tarquinius
(q he) but & thou cryē, oꝛ any noyse make
Oꝛ yf thou any creature awake
By thilke god that foꝛmed man of lyue
This sword thꝛough thy. e hert I shal ryue
And therwithall vnto her throte he sterte
And set the swoꝛde all sharpe on her hert
No woꝛd she spake, she hath no myght ther
what shal she sayne, her wyt is al ago
Right as a wolfe ꝑ fayneth a lambe alone
To whom shall she cōplayne oꝛ make mone
what, shal she fyght with an hardy knyght
wele wot men a woman hath no myght
what shal she cryē, oꝛ how shal she asterte
That hath her by ꝑ throte vꝑ swerde at hert
She asketh grace, and sayd al ꝑ she can
No wolt thou nat (q this cruel man)
As wysely Jupiter my soule sane
I shall in the stable slee thy knaue
And laye hym in thy bed, and loude cryē
That I the fande in suche auoutry
And thus thou shalt be deed, and also lese
Thy name, foꝛ thou shalt nat chese
This romaynes wyues louedē so her name
At thilke tyme, and dredden so the shame

That what for fere of slaūder & dred of deth
She lost both at ones wyt and brethe
And in a swough she lay, & wore so deed
Wen myghten smyte of her arme or heed
She kneth nothing neither soule ne kaye
Tarquinius that art a kynges heyre
And shuldest, as by lynage and by eyght
Done as a lorde, and a very knyght
why hast thou done despyte to cheualrye
why hast thou done thy lady vylanye
Alas of þ this was a vylaynous dede.
But now to þ purpose, in the story I rede
whan he was gone, & this mischaūce is fall
This lady sent after her frendes all
Father, mother, & husbond all yfere
And discheueled with her heer clere
In habyt suche as women vsed tho
Into the burying of her frendes go
She sat in hall, with a sorowfull syght
Her frendes asken what her ayleth myght
And who was deed, & she sat aye wepynge
A word for shame ne may she forth out bryng
Ne vpon hem she durst nat beholde
But at the last of Tarquiny she hem tolde
This ruful case, & al this thyng horryble
The wo to tel, were impossible
That she and all her frendes make at ones
Al had folkes hertes ben of stones
It myght haue maked hem vpon her rewe
Her hert was so wyfely and so trewe
She sayd, that for her gilt ne for her blame
Her husbād should not haue the foule name
That wolde she nat suffren by no waye
And they answerde all vnto her saye
That they forgaue it her, for it was eyght
It was no gylt, it laye not in her myght
And sayden her samples many one
But all for nought, for thus she sayde anon
Be as be may (q she) of forgyuyng
I wyll not haue no forgyft for nothynge
But priuely she caught forth a knyfe
And therwithall she raft her selfe her lyfe
And as she fell adowe, she cast her loke
And of her clothes, yet bede she toke
For in her fallyng, yet she had a care
Left that her fete, or suche thynges lay bare
So wel she loued clennesse, and eke trouth
Of her had all the towne of Rome routh
And Brutus hath by her chast bloud swore
That Tarquin shuld vanished be therfore
And all his kyn, and let the people call
And openly the tale he tolde hem all
And openly let cary her on a bere
Through al the town, þ men maye se & here
The horryble dede of her oppressioun
Ne neuer was ther kyng in Rome towne
Syns thilke day, & she was holden there
A sayne, and euer her day yhalowed dere
As in her lawe: and thus endeth Lucresse
The noble wyfe Tytus bereth wytnesse
I tell it, for she was of loue so trewe
Ne in her wyl she chaunged for no newe
And in her stable hert, sad and kynde
That in these women men may al day fynde
There as they cast her hert, ther it dwelleth
For wel I wot, that Christ him self telleth
That in Israel, as wyde as is the londe
That so great fayth in al þ londe he ne fond
As in a woman, and this is no lye
And as for men loke ye suche tyrannye
They done all day, assay them whoso lyst
The trewest is full brotell for to tryst.

Here endeth the legende of Lucrece of Rome, and here folowyth the legende of Ariadne of Athenes.

Judge infernall Mynos,
of Crete kynge
now cometh thy lot thou
comest on the tryng
Nat for thy sake only,
wryten is this story
But for to kepe ayen
vnto memorye
Of Theseus the great vntrouth of loue
For which the goddes of heuen aboue
Ben wroth, & wrath hath take for thy syn
Be red for shame, now I thy lyfe begyn
Mynos þ was the myghty kyng of Crete
That had an hundred cytes strong & great
To schole hath sent his son Androgeus
To Athenes of the which it happed thus
That he was slayne lerning philosophye
Right in that cite, nat but for enuye
The great Mynos of the which I speke
His sonnes deth is come for to wreke
Alcathoe he besieged harde and longe
But natheles the walles be so stronge
And Nisus, that was kynge of that cyte
So chyualrous, that lyttel dredeth he
Of Mynos or his hoste, toke he no cure
Tyl on a daye befel an aventure

That

That Nisus doughter stode vpon the wall
And of the siege sawe the maner all
So happed it, that at scarmishyng
She cast her herte vpon Mynos the kinge
For his beautie, and his chualrye
So sore, that she wende for to dye
And shortly of thys processe for to pace
She made Mynos wynnen thylke place
So that the cite was al at his wyll
To sauen whom hym lyste, or elis spyll
But wrekedly he quyt her kyndnesse
And let her drenche in sorowe and distresse
Here that the goddes had of her pyte
But that tale were to longe as now for me
Athenes wan thys kyng Mynos also
As Alcathoe, and other townes mo
And thus the effecte, ỳ Mynos hath so driuē
Hem of Athenes, that they mote hym yeuen
Fro yere to yere, her owne chyldren dere
For to be slayne, as ye shal after here
Thus Mynos hath a mōster, a wicked beest
That was so cruel, that wythout arrest
whā ỳ a mā was brought in to his presence
He nolde him eate, there helpeth no defence
And euery thryde yere, wythouten doute
They casten lotte, as it came aboute
On ryche and poore, he must his sonne take
And of hys chylde he must present make
To Mynos, to saue hym or to spyll
Or let his beeste deuoure him at his wyll
And thus hath mynos done right in dispyte
To wreke his sonne was set al hys delyte
And make hem of Athenes hys thral
Fro yere to yere, whyle he lyuen shal
and who he sayleth whan thus toun is won
This wycked custome is so longe ygonne
Tyl of Athenes kyng Egeus
Wote senden hys owne sonne Theseus
Sens that the lotte is fallen him vpon
To ben deuoured, for grace is there non
and forth is ladde this woful youge knight
vnto the cōurte of kyng Mynos ful of might
And in a prison fettred fast is he
Tyl the tyme he shulde yfreten be
wel maist thou wepe, O woful Theseus
That art a kynges sonne & dampned thus
Me thynketh this, that thou art depe yhold
To whom that saued the fro cares colde
And nowe yf any woman helpe the
wel oughtest thou her seruaunt for to be
And ben her trewe louer yere by yere
But nowe to come ayen to my matere

The toure, there this Theseus is throwe
Downe in the bottome derke & wonder low
was ioynyng to the wal of a foreyne
Longyng vnto the doughtren tweyne
Of Mynos, that in her chambres grete
Dwelten aboue the maystre strete
Of the towne, in ioye and in solas
Not I nat howe, it happed par caas
As Theseus complayned hym by nyght
The kynges doughter, that Ariadne hyght
And eke her suster Phedra, herden al
Hys complaynte, as they stode on the wal
And loked vpon the bryght moone
Hem lyste not to go to bedde so soone
And of hys wo they had compassion
A kynges sonne to be in such prison
And ben deuoured, thought hem great pyte
Than Ariadne spake to her suster ire
And sayd: Phedra leue suster dere
This woful lordes sonne may ye not here
Now pitously he complayneth hys kynne
And eke hys poore estate that he is inne
And gyltlesse, certayne nowe it is routh
And yf ye wol assent by my trouth
He shal ben holpen howe so that we do
Phedra answerde, ywys me is as wo
For hym, as euer I was for any man
And to hys helpe the beste rede that ỳ can
Is, that we done the gayler pryuely
To come and speake wyth vs hastely
And don thys woful mā wyth hym to come
For yf he may this monster ouercome
Thā were he quyte, ther is non other boote
Let vs wel taste hym at hys herte roote
That yf it so be, that he a weapen haue
where that he is lyke dare kepe or saue
Fyghten wyth thys fende, and hym defende
For in the prison, there as he shal descende
Ye wote wel, that the beest is in a place
That is not derke, & hath rōme & eke space
To welde an ax, or swerde, staffe, or knyfe
So that me thynketh he shulde saue his lyfe
If that he be a man, he shal do so
And we shal make hym balles eke also
Of wex & towe, that whan he gapeth faste
Into the beestes throte he shal hem caste
To sleke his honger, and encomber his teth
And eyght anon, whan that Theseus seth
The beest acheked, he shall on hym leepe
To sleen him, or they comen mote to heepe
Thys weapen shal the gayler, or that tyde
Ful pryuely within the prison hyde

And for the house is crenciled to and fro
And hath so queynte wayes for to go
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought
Therto haue I a remedye in my thought
That by a clewe of twyne, as he hath gone
The same way he may returne anone
Folowyng alway ꝑ thriede as he hath come
And whan thys beest is ouercome
Than may he flyen away out of this stede
And eke the gayler may he wyth him lede
And hym auaunce at home in hys countre
Sens that so great a lordes sonne is he
Thys is my rede, yf that ye dare it take
what shulde I lenger sermon of it make
The gayler cometh, and with him Theseus
whan these thynges ben accorded thus
Downe sate Theseus vpon hys knee
The ryght lady of my lyfe (ꝙ he)
I sorouful man, ydampned to the deth
Fro you, whyles that me lasteth breth
I wol not twynne, after thys auenture
But in your seruyce, thus I wol endure
that as a wretch vnknow, I woll you serue
For euermore, tyl that myne herte sterue
Forsake I wol at home myne heritage
And as I sayd, bene of your courte a page
If that ye vouchsafe that in thys place
Ye graunt me to haue such a grace
that I may haue, nat but my meate & drinke
And for my sustynaunce yet wol I swinke
Right as you lyste, ꝑ Mynos ne no wyght
Sens that he saw me neuer with eien sight
Ne no man els shal me espye
So slyly, and so wel I shal me gye
And me so wel disfygure, & so lowe (know
That in this worlde there shal no man me
To haue my lyfe, and to haue presence
Of you, that none to me thys excellence
And to my father shal I sende here
Thys worthy man, that is your gayler
And hym so guerdon, that he shal wel be
One of the greatest men of my countre
And yf I durst sayne, my lady bryght
I am a kynges sonne, and eke a knyght
As wolde god, yf that it myght be
Ye weren in my countre al thre
And I wyth you, to beare you companye
Than shulde ye sene yf that I therof lye
And yf that I profer you in lowe manere
To ben your page, & seruen you ryght here
But I you serue as lowly in that place
I praye to Mars to yeue me such grace
That shames deth on me there mote fal
And dethe and powerte to my frendes al
And that my spirite by nyght mote go
After my deth and walke to and fro
That I mote of traytoure haue a name
For which my spirite mote go to do me sha(me
And yf I clayme euer other degre
But ye vouchsafe to yeue it me
As I haue sayde, of shames death I dey
And mercy lady, I can naught els sey
I semly knyght was thys Theseus to se
And yonge, but of twenty yere and thre
But who so had ysene hys countenaunce
he wold haue wept for routh of his penaûce
For which this Ariadne in thys maner
Answerde to hys profer and to hys chere
I kynges sonne, & eke a knyght (ꝙ she)
To bene my seruaunt in so lowe degree
God shylde it, for the shame of women al
And leue me neuer such a case befal
And sende you grace, & fleyght of herte alle
You to defende, & knyghtly to fleen your foe
And leene here after I may you fynde
To me, and to my sustre here so kynde
That I ne repente nat to yeue you lyfe
Yet were it better I were your wyfe
Syth ye ben as gentyl borne as I
And haue a realme nat but faste by
Than ꝑ I suffred youre gentylesse to serue
Or that I let you as a page serue
It is no profyte, as vnto your kynrede
but what is ꝑ, that ma woll nat do for drede
And to my sustre syth that it is so
That she mote gone with me, yf that I go
Or els suffre dethe as well as I
That ye vnto your sonne as trewely
Done her be wedded, at your home coming
Thys is the final ende of al thys thyng
Ye swere it here vpō al that may be swore
Ye lady myne (ꝙ he) or els to morne
Wote I be, w the Mynotaur or to morow
And haueth here of myn hert blod to borow
If that ye wol, yf I had knyfe or speare
I wolde it letten out, and theron sweare
For that at erste, I wotte ye wolde me leue
By Mars, that is chefe of my beleue
So that I myght lyuen, and nat fayle
To morowe for to taken my batayle
I nolde neuer fro thys place flye
Tyl that ye shulde the very profe se
For nowe, yf that the soth I shal you say
I haue loued you ful many a day

Though

Though ye ne wyst not, in my countre
And aldermoste desyred you to se
Of any erthly lyuynge creature
Upon my trouth I sweare, and you assure
Thys seuen yere I haue your seruaunt be
Nowe haue I you, and also haue ye me
My dere herte, of Athenes Duchesse
Thys lady smyleth at hys stedfastnesse
And at hys herterly wordes and at his chere
And to her sister sayd in thys manere
And soothly sister myne (quod she)
Nowe be we duchesses both I and ye
And syker de to the regals of Athenes
And both hereafter lyuely to be queenes
And saued fro hys deth a kynges sonne
Is euer of gentyl women is the wonne
To saue a gentyl man, enforth her myght
In honest cause, and namely in his right
me thinketh no wyght ought vs her of blame
Ne beaten vs therfore an yuel name
And shortly of thys mater for to make
Thys Theseus of her hath leaue take
And euery poynte was performed in dede
As ye haue in this couenaunt herde me rede
his wepe, his clew, his thing þ I haue sayd
was by the gayler in the house playd
Ther as the Minotaure hath his dwellyng
Ryght fast by the dore, at hys entryng
And Theseus is ladde vnto hys deth
And forth vnto thys Minotaure he geth
And by the teachyng of this Adriane
He ouercame thys beest, and was hys bane
And out he cometh by the clewe agayne
ful priuely, whan he thys beest hath slayne
And the gayler gotten hath a barge
And of hys wyues treasure gan it charge
And toke hys wyfe, and eke her sister fre
And by the gayler, and wyth hem al thre
Is stole away out of the lande by nyght
And to the countre of Enopye hym dyght
There as he had a frende of hys knowyng
There feesten they, there daúsen they & sing
And in hys armes hath thys Adriane
That of þ beest hath kepte hym fro his bane
And get hym there a noble barge anone
And of hys countrey folke a ful great wone
and taketh his leaue, & homward sayleth he
And in an yle, amydde the wyde see
There as there dwelte creature none
Saue wylde beestes, and that ful many one
He made hys shyppe a londe for to sette
And in that yle, halfe a daye he lette
And sayd, that on the lande he must him rest
His maryners haue done ryght as him leste
And for to tel shortly in thys case
whan Ariadne hys wyfe a slepe was
For that her sister fayrer was than she
He taketh her in his hand and forth goth he
To shyppe, and as a traytour stale away
Whyle that thys Ariadne a slepe lay
And to hys countreyward he sayleth blyue
A twenty dueiway, the wynde hym dryue
And founde hys father drenched in the see
We lyst no more to speake of hym parde
These false loueys, poyson be her bane
But I wol turne agayne to Adriane
That is wyth slepe for wery nesse take
Ful sorowfully her herte may awake
Alas, for the myne herte hath pyte
Ryght in the dawnyng awaketh she
and gropeth in the bed, & fonde ryght nought
Alas (q she) that euer I was wrought
I am betrayed, and her herte to rente
And to the stronde bare tote fast she went
And cryed: Theseus myne herte swete
where be ye that I may not with you mete
And myght thus wyth beestes bene yslayne
The holow rockes answerde her agayne
No man she sawe, and yet shone the moone
And hye vpon a rocke she went soone
And sawe his barge, sayling in the see
Colde wore her herte, & ryght thus sayd she
Weker than ye, lynde I the beestes wyld
Hath he nat synne, that he her thus begyld
she cryed, O turne agayne for routh & synne
Thy barge hath not al hys meyne inne
Her kercheef on a pole stycked she
Affaunce he shulde it wele yse
And him remembre that she was behynde
and turne agayne, & on the stronde her finde
But al for naught, his way he is gone
And downe she fel a swowne on a stone
And vp she rysl, and kyssed in al her care
The steppes of his fete, there he hath fare
And to her bedde ryght thus she speketh tho
Thou bedde (q she) þ hast receyued two
Thou shalt answere of two, and not of one
where is the greater parte, away gone
alas, whet shal I wretched wight become
For though so be that bote none here come
Home to my countrey dare I not for drede
I can my selfe in thys case nat rede
what shulde I tel more her cõplayning
It is so longe it were an heauy thyng

In her

In her epistle, Naso telleth all
But shortly to the ende tell I shall
The goddes haue her holpen for pyte
And in the signe of Taurus men may se
The stones of her crowne shyne clere
I wyl no more speake of this matere
And thus thys false louer can begyle
His trew loue, the dyuel quyte him his wyle

Here endeth the legende of Ariadne and here foloweth the legende of Phylomene.



Thou peuer of the formes that hast wrought
The fayre world, & bare it in thy thought
Eternally, er thou thy werke began
why madest thou unto the slaunder of man
Or al be that it was not thy doyng
As for that fende, to make such a thyng
why suffredest þ that Tereus was bore
That is in loue so false and so forswore
That fro this worlde vp to the fyrste heuen
Corrumpeth, whan þ folke his name neuen
And as to me, so grisly was hys dede
That whan that I thys foule storye rede
Myne eyen weren foule, and sore also
Yet lasteth the venyme of so longe ago
That infecteth hym that wolde beholde
The storye of Tereus, of whyche I tolde
Of Trace was he lorde, & kynne to Marte
The cruel god that stante wyth blody darte
And wedded had he wyth blysful chere
Kynge Pandyons fayre doughter dere
That hyght Progne, flour of her countre
Though Iuno lyste nat at the feest be
Ne Hymeneus, that god of weddyng is
But at the feest redy bene ywys
The furys thre, with al her mortal brande
The oule al nyght aboute the balkes wonde
That prophete is of wo, and of mischaunce
Thys cruel, ful of songe and ful of daunce
Laste a fourtenyght, or lytel lasse
But shortly of thys storye for to passe
(For I am wery of hym for to tel)
Fyue yere hys wyfe and he togyther dwel
Tyl on a day she gan so sore longe
To sene her suster that she sawe not longe
That for desyre she nyst not what to say
But to her husbonde gan she for to pray
For goddes loue, that he mote ones gone
Her suster for to sene, and come ayen anone
Or els but she mote to her wende
She prayed hym þ he wold after her sende
And thys was day by day al her prayere
wyth al humblesse of wifehode, wolde & chere
Thus Tereus let make hys shippes yare
And in to Grece hym selfe is forth fare
Unto hys father in law gan he praye
To vouchsafe, that for a moneth or twaye
That Philomene hys wyues suster myght
On Progne his wife, but ones haue a syght
And she shal come to you agayne anone
Hy selfe with her, I wyl both come & gone
And as my hertes lyfe I wyl her kepe
Thus olde Pandion, this kyng gan wepe
For tendernesse of herte, for to leue
His doughter gon, and for to yeue her leue
Of al thys worlde he loued nothyng so
But at the laste leaue hath she to go
For Philomene wyth salte teares eke
Gan of her father grace for to beseke
To sene her suster, that her longeth so
And hym embraceth, wyth her armes two
And there al so yonge and fayre was she
That whan that Tereus sawe her beaute
And of array, that there was none her lyche
And yet of beaute was she to so ryche
He cast his fyry herte vpon her so
That he wolde haue her, howe so that it go
And wyth hys wyles kneled, and so prayde
Tyl at the last Pandion thus sayde
Nowe sonne (q he) that art to me so dere
I the betake my yonge doughter dere
That beareth the key of al myne hertes lyfe
And grete wel my doughter, and thy wyfe
And yeue her leaue somtyme for to play
That she maye se me ones or I dey
And sothly he hath made hym ryche feest
And to hys folke, the moste and eke the leest
that with him came, & yaf hym giftes grete
And hym conueyeth through þ maister strete
Of Athenes, and to the see hym brought
And tourneth home no malyce he ne thought
The ores pulleth forth the vessell faste
And in to Trace arryueth at the laste
And vp in to a forest he her ledde

And

And to a caue priuely hym spedde
And in thys derke caue, yf her lyste
Or nought, he badde her for to rest
Of which her herte agrose, and sayde thus
where is my suster, brother Tereus
And there wythal she wepte tenderly
And quoke for frare pale and pytously
Ryght as the lãde, that of the wolfe is bitte
Or as the culuer, þ of the Egle is smytten
And is out of hys clawes escaped
yet it is a ferde, and a waped
Leste it be hente eftsones: so fare she
But veterly it may none other be
By force hath thys traytour done a dede
That he hath reft her of her maydenhede
Maugre her heed, by strength & by his myst
Lo here a dede of men, and that a tyght
She cryed suster wyth ful loude steuen
And father dere helpe me god in heuen
It helpeth not, and yet thys false theefe
Hath done thys lady yet a more mischefe
For feare, leste she shulde hys shame crye
And done hym openly a vylany
And wyth hys swerde her tonge of kerfe he
And in a castel made her for to be
Ful priuely in prison euermore
And kept her to hys vsage and to hys store
So that she ne myght neuer more astarte
O sely Phylomene, wo is in thyne herte
Huge bene thy sorowes, and wonder smert
God wreke the, and sende the thy bone
Nowe is tyme I make an ende sone
Thys Tereus is to hys wyfe ycome
And in hys armes hath his wyfe ynome
And pytously he wepte, and shoke hys heed
And swore her, that he soũde her syster deed
For which thys sely Progne hath such wo
That nygh her sorouful hert brake in two
And thus in teeres lette I Progne dwell
And of her suster forth I woll you tell
Thys wofull lady ylerned had in youth
So that she worken and embrauden couth
And weauen in stole the rademore
And it of women hath be woued yore
And sothly for to sayne, she hath her fyl
Of mete and drynke, of clothyng at her wyl
And couth eke rede wel ynough and endyte
But wyth a penne she couthe nat wute
But letters can she weaue, to and fro
So that by the yere was al a go
She had wouen in a stames large
how she was brouzt fro Athenes in a barge
And in a caue howe that she was brought
And all the thynge þ Tereus hath wrought
She waue it well, & wrote the storye aboue
Howe she was serued for her susters loue
And to a man a tynge she yaue anone
And prayed hym by signes for to gone
Unto the quene, and beaten her that cloth
And by signe swore many a othe
She sholde him yeue what she getten myst
This man anone vnto the quene him dight
And toke it her, and al the maner tolde
and whã þ Progne hath this thing beholde
No word she spake, for sorow & eke for rage
But fayned her to gone on pylgrymage
To Baccus temple, and in a lytle stounde
Her dombe suster sytting hath she founde
wepyng in the castel her selfe alone
Alas the wo, constraynte, and the mone
that Progne vpõ the dombe suster maketh
In armes euerych of hem other taketh
And thus I let hem in her sorowe dwell
The remenaunt is no charge to tel
For thys is al & some, thus was she serued
That neuer agylte, ne deserued
Unto thys crewel man, that she of wyste
Ye may beware of men yf that you lyste
For al be that he wolde not for shame
Done as Tereus, to lese hys name
Ne serue you as a murtherer or a kyaue
Ful lytle whyle shul ye trewe hym haue
that wol I sayn al were he now my brother
But yt so be that he may haue another

Here endeth the legende of Phylomene, and here foloweth the legende of Phillis.

By proue, as wel as by auctoute
That wycked fruite commeth of wycked tre
That may ye finde, if that it lyketh you
But for thys ende I spekethys as nowe
To tel you of false Demophon
In loue a falser herde I neuer non
But it were hys father Theseus

God

God for hys grace fro such one kepe vs
Thus these women prayen, that it here
Nowe to the effecte turne I of my matere
Dystroyed is of Troye the cite
Thys Demophon came sayling in the see
Towarde Athenes, to hys paleys large
With him came many a ship & many a barge
Ful of folke, of whych ful many one
Is wounded sore, and sicke and wo begone
And they haue at the seige longe playne
Behynde him came a wynd, and eke a rayne
that shoke so sore, hys sayle myght nat stōde
Him were leuer than al the worlde alonde
So hunteth hym the tempest to and fro
So derke it was, he couthe no where go
And wyth a wawe brusten was hys sterne
Hys ship was rente so lowe, in such manere
That carpenter couthe it not amende
The see by nyght as any torche brende
For woode, and poureth hym vp and downe
Tyl Neptune hath of him compassioun
And Thetis Chorus, Tryton, and they al
And maden hym vp on londe to sal
whereof that Phillis lady was and quene
Lycurgus doughter, fayrer vnto sene
Than is the floure agayne the bright sonne
Ynneth is Demophon to londe ywonne
weake & eke wery, and hys folke forpyned
Of werynesse, and also enfamyned
And to the deth he was almost ydriuen
Hys wyse folke counsayle haue him yeuen
To seken helpe and socour of the quene
And loken what hys grace myght bene
And maken in that lande some cheuesaunce
And kepen hym fro wo, and fro mischaunce
For sycke he was, and almost at the dethe
Vnneth myght he speke, or drawe brethe
And lythe in Rodopeya hym for to rest
whā he may walke, hym thought it was best
Vnto the countre to seken for socour
Men knewe hym well, and dyd him honour
For at Athenes duke and lorde was he
As Theseus hys father hath vbe
That in hys tyme was great of renoun
No man so great in al hys regioun
And lyke hys father of face and of stature
And false of loue, it came hym of nature
As doth the fore Renarde, the fores sonne
Of kynd he couthe his olde fathers wonne
wythout lore, as can a drake swymme
whan it is caught, & caryed to the brymme
this honorable quene phillis doth hunchere
Her lyketh wel hys sporte and hys manere
But I am agreted here beforne
To write of hem þ in loue bene forsworne
And eke to hast me in my legende
which to performe, god me grace sende
Therfore I passe shortly in thys wyse
Ye haue wel herde of Theseus the gyle
In the betrayeng of fayre Ariane
That of her pyte kept hym fro hys bane
At shorte wordes, ryght so Demophon
The same way, & the same pathe hath gone
That dyd hys false father Theseus
For vnto Phillis hath he sworne thus
To wedden her, and her hys trouth plyght
And pyked of her al the good he myght
whā he was hole & sounde, and had his rest
And doth wyth Phillis, what so þ hym lest
As wel I couthe, yf that me lyst so
Tellen al hys doyng to and fro
He sayd to hys countrey mote he sayle
For there he wolde her weddyng apparayle
As fyl to her honoure, and hys also
And openly he toke hys leaue tho
And to her swore he wolde not sojourne
But in a moneth agayne he wolde retourne
And in that lande let make hys ordynaunce
As verry lorde, and toke the obeysaunce
wel and humbly, and hys shyppes dyght
And home he goth the nerr way he myght
For vnto Phillis yet came he nought
And that hath she so hard and sore ybought
Alas as the storye doth vs record:
She was her owne deth wyth a cord:
whan she sawe that Demophon her trayed
but fyrst wrote she to him, & fast him prayed
He wolde come and deliuer her of payne
As I rehearce shal a worde or twayne
We lyst nat vouchsafe on hym to swynke
Dispenden on hym a penne ful of ynke
For false in loue was he, ryght as his syre
The dyuel sette her soules both on a fyre
But of the letter of Phyllies wol I write
I wold or twayne, althouz it be but lyte
Thyn hostesse (q she) O Demophon
Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon
Of Rhodopeye, vpon you mote complayne
Ouer the terme sette bet wyxt vs twayne
That ye ne holden forwarde, as ye sayde
Your ancre, wbych ye in our hauen layde
Hyght vs, that ye wolde comen out of dout
Or that the moone ones went about
But tymes foure, þ mone hath hyde her face

Seng

Sens thylke daye ye wente fro thys place
And foure tymes lyght the worlde agayne
But for all that, yet shall I sothly sayne
yet hath the streme of Scython not brought
From Athenes the shyp, yet came it nought
And yf that ye the terme tolden wolde
As I or other trewe louers do sholde
I playne not (god wote) before my day
But all her letter wryten I ne may
By order, for it were to me a charge
Her letter was eyght longe, and therto large
But here and there, in ryme I haue it layde
There as me thought that she hath wel sayd
She sayd, the layes cometh not agayne
Ne to the worde, there nys no fey certayne
But I wote why ye come not (quod she)
For I was of my loue to you so fre
And of the goddes that ye haue swore
That her vengeaunce fall on you therfore
ye be not suffysaunt to beare the payne
To mocke trusted I, well may I sayne
Upon your lynage, and your fayre tonge
And on your teeres, falsly out wronge
Howe coude ye wepe so by crafte (quod she)
Haye there suche teeres fayned be
Nowe certes, yf ye wold haue in memorie
It ought be to you but lytell glorie
To haue a sely mayde thus betrayde
To god (q she) pray I, and ofte haue prayde
That it be nowe the greatest pryce of all
And moste honour, that euer you shal befall
And when thyne olde auncetres paynted be
In whych men may her worthynesse se
Then praye I god, thou paynted be also
That folke may reden, forth by as they go
Lo thys is he, that wyth hys flatterye
Betrayed hath, and done her villanye
That was hys trewe loue, in thought & dede
But sothly of o poynt yet maye they rede
That ye ben lyke your father, as in thys
For he begyled Ariadne ywys
wyth such an arte, and suche subtelte
As thou thy selfen haste begyled me
As in that poynt, all though it be not feyre
Thou folowest certayne, and arte his heyre
But sens thus synfully ye me begyle
My body mote ye sene, wythin a whyle
Eyght in the hauen of Athenes fletynge
wythouten sepulture and burynge
Though ye ben harder then is any stone
And whē thys letter was forth sent anone
And knewe how bytel & how false he was
She for dyspayre forlyd her selfe alas
Much sorowe hath she, for she beset her so
Beware ye women of your subtyll foe
Sens yet thys daye, men maye ensample se
And trusteth nowe in loue no man but me.

Here endeth the legende of Phillis, and here foloweth the legende of Hypermeſter.

IN Grece whylom weren bretheren two
Of whych that one was called Danao
That many a sonne hath of hys body wonne
As such fals louers oft cō
Amonge hys sonnes all there was one
That aldermoste he loued of euerychone
And whē this chyld was borne, this Danao
Shope hym a name, and called hym Lyno
That other brother called was Egiste
That was of loue as false as euer hym lyste
And many a doughter got he in hys lyfe
Of whych he got vpon hys eyght wyfe
A doughter dere, and dyd her for to call
Hypermeſtra, yongest of hem all
The whych chylde of her natiuite
To all good thewes borne was she
As lyked to the goddes or she was borne
That of the shefe she shulde be the corne
The werdes that we clepen destyne
Hath shapen her, that she muste nedes be
Pytous, sadde, wyse, trewe as stele
And to thys woman it accordeth wele
For though ꝑ Venus haue her great beaute
wyth Jupiter compowned so was she
That conscience, trouth, & drede of shame
And of her wyfehode for to kepe her name
Thys thought her was felicyte as here
And reed Mars, was that tyme of the yere
So feble, that hys malyce is hym take
Repressed hath Venus hys crafte
And what wyth Venus, & other oppression
Of houses, Mars hys venym is a don
That Hypermeſter dare not handle a knyfe
In malyce, though she shulde lese her lyfe
But natheleſſe, as heuen gan tho turne

Two noble aliaunts, hight the of Danaine
That made her of hye in poysion
And I shall after make mencion
Of Danao and Egyptes old
And though so be þ they were brethren two
For thylke tyme was spared no lynage
It lyked hem to maken mariage
Betwyxte hypermestre and hym Lino
And casten suche a daye it shalde so
And full accorded was it vtterly
The aray is wrought, the tyme is fast by
And thus Lyno hath of hys fathers brother
The doghter wedded, & ech of hē hath other
The torches brennen, & the lampes brygbt
The sacrifyce ben full redy dyght
Thensence out of the fyre reketh soote
The floure the leefe, is rent vp by the roote
To maken garlandes and crownes hye
Full is the place of sounde of mynstralcye
Of songes amourous of mariage
As thylke tyme was the playne vsage
And thys was in the paleys of Egyste
That i his house was lord, right as him lyst
And thus that daye they dyuen to an ende
The frendes taken leue, & home they wende
The nyght is comen, þ bryd shal go to bedde
Egyste to hys chambre fast hym spedde
And priuely let hys doughter call
when þ the house voyded was of hem all
He loketh on hys doughter with glad chere
And to her spake, as ye shall after here
My ryght doughter tresour of myne herte
Seme fyrst þ day, that shapē was my sherte
Or by the fatall fulfter had my dome
So nye myne herte neuer thynge ne come
As thou hypermestre, doughter dere
Take hede what thy father sayeth the here
And werke after the wyser euermo
For alderfyrst doughter I loue the so
That all the worlde to me nys halfe so leefe
Ne nolde rede the to thy myschefe
For all the good vnder the colde moone
And what I mene, it shalde sayd right soone
wyth protestacion, as sayne these wyse
That but thou do, as I shall the deuyse
Thou shalt be dede, by him þ al hath wrought
At short wordes thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleys, or that thou be dede
But thou consent, and werke after my rede
Take thys to the fratfull conclusyon
Thys hypermistre caste her eyen doun
And quoke as doth the leefe of aspe gerne
Dede went her herte, & lyke as a thern to stre
And sayd: Syre and father all your wyll
After my myght, god wote I shall fulfyll
So it be to me no confusyon
I wyll (quod he) haue none exception
And out he caught a knyfe, as rasour kene
Hyde thys (q he) whet it be not sene
And when thyne husbande is to bedde go
whyle that he slepeth, caste hys throte a two
For in my dremes it is warned me
Howe that my nevewe shall my bane be
But whych I not, wherefore I will be syker
yf thou say nay, we two shall parte a byker
As I haue sayd, by him that I haue sworne
This hypermistre hath nigh her wyt forlorne
And for to passen heavinesse out of þ place
She graūted hi, ther was none other grace
And wythal a coffre[r] taketh he tho
And sayd, herof a draught ar two
Yeue hym drynke, when he goeth to reste
As he shall slepe as longe as euer the leste
The narcotikes and apies ben so stronge
And go thy way, lest þ hym thynke to longe
Out cometh þ bryd, & with ful sobre chere
As is of maydens ofte the maneere
To chaūbre brought, with reuel & with songe
And shortly, lest thys tale be to longe
Thys Lino and she both brought to bedde
And euery wyght out at the doze him spedde
The nyght is wasted, and he fell a slepe
Full tenderly begynneth she to wepe
She rysl her vp, & dredfully she quaketh
As doth the braūche, that zephirus shaketh
And bulstre were all in Bizance that eyte
As colde as any stoon nowe weareth she
For pyte by the herte strayned her so
And drede of deth doth her so mocche wo
That twyse downe she fyll, in suche a were
She rysle her vp, and staggereth here & there
And on her handes fast loketh she
Alas, shall myne handes bloody be
I am a mayde, and as by my nature
And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture
Myne handes ben not shapen for a bocher
Is for to reue no man fro hys lyfe
what dyuell haue I with the knyfe to do
And shall I haue my throte corue a two
Then shall I blede alas, and be shende
And nedes thys thynge mote haue an ende
Or he or I mote nedes lese our lyfe
Nowe certes (quod she) sens I am hys wyfe
And hath my fayth, yet is it bette for me

For

Fyn to be deed, in wykkely honeste
Then be a traytour, lyenge in my shame
Be as be may, for erneſt or for game
He ſhall awake, and ryſe and go hys way
Out at thys gutter, er that it be day
And wept full tenderly vpon hys face
And in her armes gan hym to embrace
And hym she roggeth, and awaketh ſofte
And at the wyndowe lepe he fro the lofte
Whē ſhe hath warned hym, & don hym boote
Thys Lino ſwyfte was, and lyght of foote
And from her ran, a full good paas
Thys fely woman is ſo weake, alas
And helpeleſſe, ſo that er ſhe ferre wente
Her cruell father dyd her for to hente
Alas Lyno, why arte thou ſo vnkynde
Why ne haſte thou remembred in thy mynde
And taken her, and ledde her forth wyth the
For when ſhe ſawe that gone away was he
And that ſhe myght not ſo faſte go
Ne folowen hym, ſhe ſate downe ryght tho
And tyll ſhe was caught, & fettred in priſon
Thys tale is ſayd for thys concluſyon.

¶ Thus ende the legendes of good women.

¶ A goodly Balade of Chaucer.

MOther of nature, beſt be loued of all
And freſheſt floure, to whō good thryft god ſēde
Your chylde, yf it luſt you me ſo to call
All be I vnable my ſelfe ſo to pretende
To your diſcretion I recomende
Myne herte and all, wyth euery circūſtaūce
All hooly to be vnder your gouernaunce

Woſte deſyre I, and haue, and euer ſhall
Thing, which might your herts eaſe amēde
Haue me excuſed, my power is but ſmall
Natheleſſe of ryght ye ought to cōmende
My good wyll, whych fayne wolde entende
To do you ſeruyce, for all my ſuffyſaunce
Is holy to be vnder your gouernaunce

Weuk in: in herte, whych neuer ſhall apall
Ye freſhe & newe, & ryght glad to diſpende
My tyme in your ſeruyce, what ſo befal
Beſechynge your excellence to defende
My ſympleneſſe, yf ignoraunce offende
In any wyſe, ſyth that myne affyaunce
Is holy to ben vnder your gouernaunce

Dayſy of lyght, herry grounde of comforte
The Sunnes doughter (ye hyght as I rede
For whē he weſtreth, farwel your diſporte
By your nature anone ryght for pure drede
Of ꝑ rude nyght, ꝑ wyth his boyſtous wede
Of darkeneſſe, ſhadoweth our emyſpere
Then cloſen ye, my lyues lady dere

Dawynge the daye, to hys kynde reſorte
And Phebꝰ your father, wt his ſtremes rede
Adorneth the morowe, conſumynge the forte
Of myſty cloudes, that wolden queriede
Trewe humble hertes, wyth her myſtyhede
Nere comforte a dayes, when eyen clere
Diſcloſe and ſpriede my lyues lady dere

Ye vouchſay: but great god diſpoſeth
And maketh caſuell by hys prouidence
Suche thynge, as mās frele wytte purpoſeth
All for the beſt, yf that our conſcience
Not grutche it but in humble pacience
Ye receyue, for God ſayeth wythout fable
A faythfull herte euer is acceptable

Cautels, who ſo vſeth gladly gloſeth
To eſchewe ſuche it is ryght hygh prudence
What ye ſayd ones, my herte oppoſeth
That my worynge tapes in your abſence
Pleaſed you moche better then my preſence
Yet can I more, ye be not excuſable
A faythfull herte euer is acceptable

Quaketh my penne, my ſpryt ſuppoſeth
That in my writing ye fynd wol ſome offēce
Myn hert weikneth thus ſone, anon it riſeth
Now hotte, now colde, and ete in ferueūce
That myſſe is, is cauſed of negligence
And not of malyce, therfore beth merciable
A faythfull herte euer is acceptable.

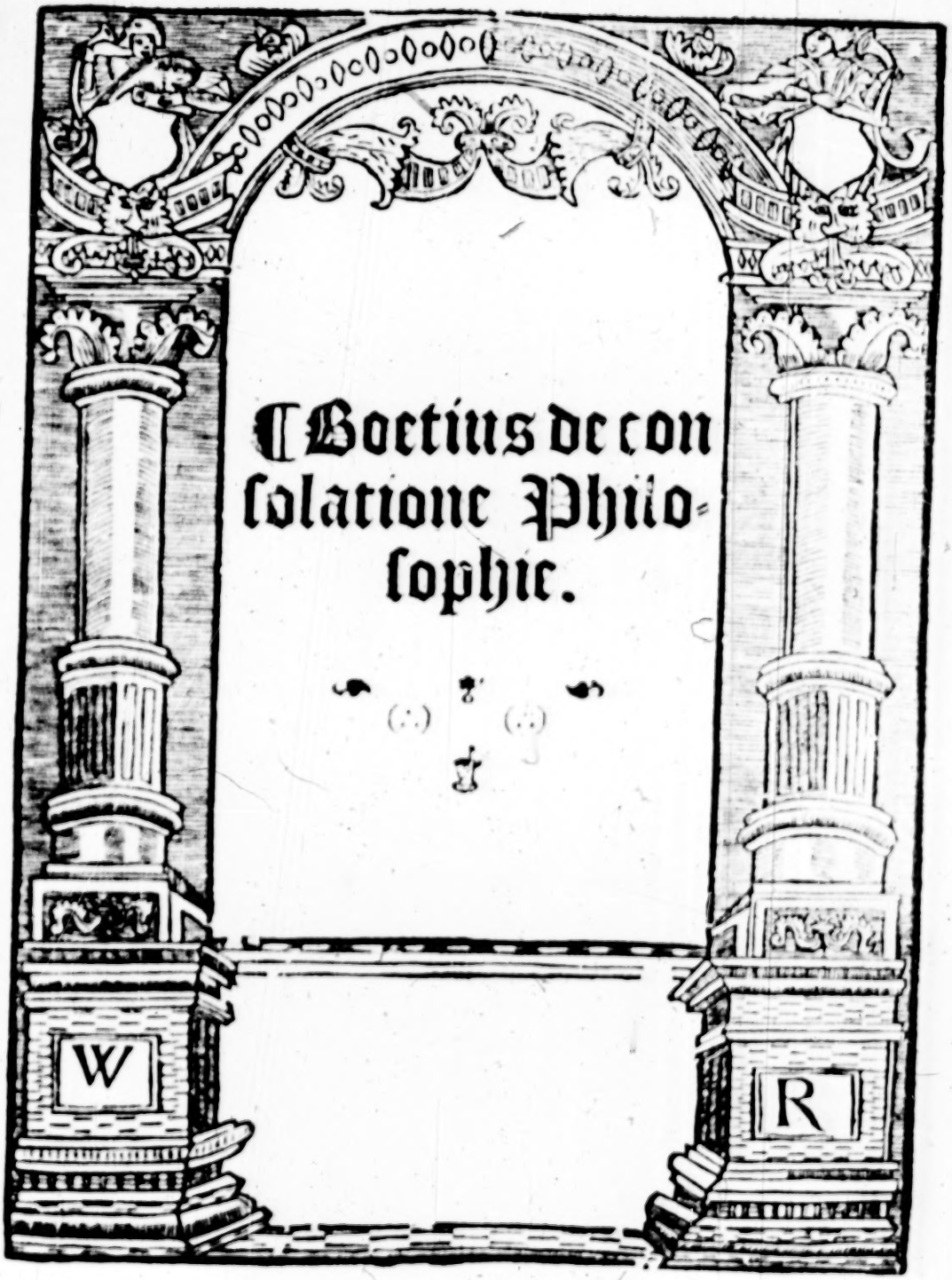
A balade.

¶ Lenuoye.

¶ Forth clopiayne, forth ladyynge eloquence
Forth ypocrill letture of endytynge lame
I haue beſought my ladyes ſapience
Of thy behalfe, to accepte in game
Thyne inabilite, do thou the ſame
Wyde, haue moze yet: Je ſerue Jouelle
Now forth, I cloſe the in holy Uenus name
The ſhall vncloſe my herters gouernerelle.

¶ FINIS.

¶ Thus endeth thys balade: And here folowyth the boke of Boecius de conſolatione philoſophie.


Boetius de con
solatione Philo=
sophie.
W
R

Carmina qui quondam ſtudio florente peregi
Flebilis heu meſtos cogor inire modos.



Las, I weppynge am conſtrayned to begynners of ſorowfull matter, that whylom in flourſſhynge ſtudye made delitable dytees For lo, rendynge muſes of poetes, endyten to me thynges to be wutten, and dyery teeres. At laſt no drede ne myght ouercome tho muſes, that they ne weren felowes and folouden my way, that is to ſay: whan I was exiled, they that weren of my youthe whylom weleful and grene, comforten nowe ſorowfull wyerdes of me olde man: for elde is comen vnwarely vpon me, haſted by ꝑ harmes that I haue, and ſorowe hath cõmaunded hys age to be in me. Heeres bore arne ſtadde ouertymelyche vpon my heed: and the ſlacke ſkynne trembleth of myn empted body. Thylke dethe of men is weleful that ne cometh nat in yeres that beſwete but cometh to wretches often yeleped. Alas, alas, with howe deefe an eere dethe cruel turneth awaye fro wretches, and nayeth for to cloſe weppynge eyen. Whyle fortune vnfayeth full fauoured me wyth lyght goodes, the ſorowfull houre, that is to ſaye, the dethe, had almoſte dreynt myn heed: But nowe for Fortune cloudy hathe chaunged her deceyuable chere to mewarde, myne vnpytous lyfe draweth alonge vnagreable dwellynges. O ye my frendes, what or wherto auaunted ye me to ben welefull: for he that hath fallen, ſtode in no ſtedfaſt degre.

Hec dum mecum tacitus ipſe reputarem, querimoniamq; lachrimabilem ſtili officio deſignarem: aſtitiſſe mihi ſupra verticem viſa eſt mulier reuerendi admodum vultus, oculis ardentibus, & vltra communem. &c.

In the meane whyle that I thus recorded theſe thynges with my ſelfe, and marked my weply complaynt wyth office of poyntell: I ſaugh ſtondynge aboue the hyght of myne heed, a woman of full great reuerence by ſemblaunte: Her eyen brennynge, and clere ſeyng ouer the commen myght of men, wyth a lyuely colour, & wyth ſuche vigour and ſtrength, that it ne myght nat ben nempned, all were it ſo that ſhe were full of ſo great age, that men ne wolden nat trowé in no maner that ſhe were of our elde. The ſtature of her was of doutous iugemẽt, for ſomtyme ſhe conſtrayned and ſhronke her ſelue lyke to the commen meſure of men: And ſomtyme it ſemed that ſhe touched the heuen wyth the height of her heed. And whã ſhe houe her heed hyer, ſhe perced the ſelfe heuen, ſo that the ſyght of men lokynge was in ydell: her clothes were maked of ryght delye thredes and ſubtyll craft of perdurable matiere. The whiche clothes ſhe had wouen wyth her owne handes, as I knewe well after by her ſelfe declaryng, and ſhewyng to me the beaute: the which clothes a derkneſſe of a foryeten and diſpyſed elde had dulked & derked, as it is wonte to derke by ſmoked ymages. In ꝑ nethereſt hẽme or bordure of theſe clothes, men redde ywouen therin a grekiſſhe Π. that ſignifieth the lyfe Actyue, and aboue that letter in the hyeſt bordoure a grekyſſhe Θ. that ſignyfyeth the lyfe Contemplatyue. And bytwene theſe two letters there were ſene degrees noblyewrought in maner of ſadders, by which degrees men might clymben from the nethereſt lettre to the vppereſt: Na theleſſe handes of ſome men hadden kerue that clothe by violence or by ſtrength, and euerych man of hem had borne awaye ſuche pees as he myght geten. And forſothe thys foreſayde woman bare ſmale bookes in her right hande, and in her lyfte hande ſhe bare a ſceptre. And whan ſhe ſawe theſe poetycall muſes approchyng aboute my bed, and endytynge wordes to my wepynges, ſhe was a lytell amoued, and glowed wyth cruell eyen. Who (q ſhe) hath ſuffred approchen to thys ſycke man theſe comen trompettes, of whych is the place, that men callen Theatre, the whiche onelye ne aſwagen nat hys ſorowes with remedies, but they wold feden and nouriſſhe hym wyth ſwete venym. Forſothe that ben tho that with thornes and prickynges of talẽtes of affections, which that ben nothing fructuous nor profytable, diſtroyen the corne

plentuous of fruites of reaſon. For they holden herbes of men in vſage, but they ne deyuert no folke fro maladye. But yf the muſes had wythdrawen fro me wyth youre flatteryes anye an vnconuynge and vnprofytable man, as ben wonte to fynde comenly among the people, I wolde well ſuffre the laſſe greuouſly. For why, in ſuche an vnprofytable man, myne ententes were nothyng endamaged. But ye wythdrawen fro me this man, that hathe ben nouryſſhed in my ſtudyes of ſcholes of Eleaticis and of Achademicis in Greece. But goth nowe rather awaye ye mermaydens, whyche that ben ſwete tyll it be at the laſte, and ſuffreth thys man to be cured and heled by my muſes, that is to ſaye, by my notefull ſciences. And thus thys companye of muſes yblamed, caſten wrothly the chere downwarde to the erthe, and ſhewynge by redneſſe her ſhame, they paſſeden ſorowfully the threſſholde. And I of whome the ſyght plounged in teeres was derked, ſo that I ne myght nat knowe, what that woman was of ſo imperyall auctoute, I wore all abaſſhed and ſtonyed, and caſt my ſyght downe to the erthe, and began ſtyll for to abyde what ſhe wolde done afterwarde. Than came ſhe nere and ſet her downe vpon the vtereſt comer of my bedde, and ſhe beholdynge my chere that was caſte to the erthe, heauy and greuous of wepyng, coplayned wyth theſe wordes (that I ſhall ſayne) the perturbacion of my thought.

Heu q̄ precipiti merſa profundo,
Mens hebet, & propria luce relicta,
Tenditad terrenas ire tenebras:
Terrenis quoties flatibus acta,
Creſcit in immenſum noxia cura.
Hic quondam celo liber aperto. ꝛc.

ALas, how the thought of this man dreynt in ouerthwyng depneſſe, dulleth & forlerreth his propre clerenelle, myntyng to gone in to forayne derkeneſſe, as ofte as hys anoyous buſynes wereth without meſure, that is dryuen wyth worldely wyndes. This man that whylom was free, to whom the heuen was open and knowen, and was wonte to gone in heuenly pathes, and ſawe the lightneſſe of the reed ſunne, and beheilde the ſterres of the colde moone, and whyche ſterre in heauen beſeth wandrynge recourſes yll ſtyte by dyuers ſpheres. Thys man ouercomer had comprehended all this thynge by nombre of acompteyng in aſtronompe. And ouer this he was wont to ſeken the cauſes, whener þ ſowynge wyndes mouen, and beſpen the ſmothe water of the ſee. And what ſpyrute tourneth the ſtable heuen. And why the ſterre ryſeth out of the reed eſte, to fallen in the weſtren wawes. And what attempreth the luſty houres of the fyrſt ſommer ſeaſon, and brygheth and apparayleth the erth wyth roſy floures. And who maketh the plentuous Autumpne in full yeres fleten wyth heuy grapes. And ek thys man was wonte to tell the dyuers cauſes of nature that were hydde. Alas howe lightely is enuyed the lyght of hys thought, and hys necke is preſſed wyth heuy chaynes, and beareth hys chere enclyned adowne for the great weight, and is conſtrayned to loken on the fole erthe.

Sed magis medicine (inquit) tempus eſt q̄ querele. Hoc. Tu vero ſtans in me intenta luminibus. Philo. Tu ne tile es (ait) qui noſtro quondam lacte nutritus, noſtris educatus alimentis, i virilis animi robur cuaſceras. ꝛc.

QVit tyme is nowe of medicine (q̄ ſhe) more thā complaynte: Forſothe than the entendyng to me warde wyth all the lokyng of her eyen ſayde. Arte not thou he (q̄ ſhe) that whylom I nouriſhed with my myrke, and foſtred wyth my metes, were eſcaped and comen to the corage of a parfayte man: Certes I yaue the ſuche armures, that yf thou thy ſelfe ne haddeſt fyrſte caſte hem awaye, they ſhulden haue defended the in ſykerneſſe, that maiſt be ouercomen. Knoweſt thou not me? why art thou ſtil: is it for ſhame or for aſtonyenge? It were me leuer it were for ſhame, but it ſemeth me that aſtonyenge hathe oppreſſed the. And whan ſhe ſawe me not onely ſtyll, but rather

but rather wythout offyce of tonge and all ſounde, ſhe layde her hande ſoftely vpon my breſte, and ſayde: Here is no peryll (q ſhe) he is fallen in to a lytarge, whiche that is a comune ſyckneſſe to herres that ben diſeyued. He hath a lyttell forgeten hym ſelfe. But certes he ſhall lightly remembren hym ſelfe, yf ſo be that he hath knowen me ar nowe. And that he maye doone ſo, I wyll wype hys eyen a lyttell that be derked by the cloude of mortall thynges. Theſe wordes ſayd ſhe, and wyth the lappe of her garnemēt yplited in a krouce ſhe dried myne eyen that weren full of the wawes of my weppynges.

Tunc me diſcuſſa liquerunt nocte tenebre: Luminibuſq; pꝛiozi redit vigoz. Vt cum pꝛecipiti glomerantur ſidera choꝛo. Nimboſiſq; polus ſtetit imbꝛibus. Nec latet, ac non dum celo demigrantibus aſtris. ꝛc.

Thus whan that nyght was diſcuſſed away, derkeneſſe forlete me, and to myne eyen repayred agayn her firſt ſtrēgth And right as by enſample, as the ſonne is hydde whan the ſterres ben couerde with cloudes, by a ſwyfte wynde that hyght Chorus, and the firmament ſtante derked by wete plungy cloudes. And that the ſterres not aperen vpon the heuen, ſo that the nyght ſemeth ſpread vpon the erthe. If than the wynde that hight Boreas, ſent out of the caue of the coutrey of Trace, beareth thys nyght, that is to ſayne, chaſeth it awaye, and diſcouereth the cloſed daye, than ſtorneth Phebus yſhaken with ſodayne lyght, and ſmyteth with hys beames in materyng eyen.

Haud aliter triſticie nebulis diſſolutis, hauſi celum, & ad cognoſcendā medicantis faciem, mentem recepi. Itaq; vbi in eā deduxi oculos, intuitumq; defixi, reſpicio nutricem meam, in cuius ab adoleſcentia. ꝛc.

Right ſo and no other wyſe, ꝑ cloudes of ſoꝛowe diſſolued & done away, I toke heuen and receyued myndе to knowen the face of my phiſycien: ſo that I ſette myne eyen vpon her and faſtned my lokyng. I beheelde my norice Philoſophie in whoſe houſe I had conuerſed fro my youthe, and I ſayde thus. O thou mayſtreſſe of al vertues diſcended from the ſouerayne ſete, why art thou comen in to this ſolitary place of myne exile? Arte thou comen for thou arte made coulpable wyth me of falſe blames? O (quod ſhe) my norice, ſhulde I forſake the nowe, and ſhulde I not parten with the by comen trauayle ꝑ charge that thou haſte ſuffred for enuy of my name? Certes it were not leſull ne ſytteyng to Philoſophie to leten wythout company the way of him ꝑ is innocent: Shuld I than redoute my blame, and agriſe as though there were befallen a new thyng? For troweſt thou that Philoſophie be nowe alder fyrſte aſſayled in peryls by folke of wycked maner? Haue I not ſtryuen wyth full great ſtryfe in olde tyme before the age of my Plato, ayenſt the foolehardyneſſe of folye? And eke the ſame Plato lyuyng hys mayſter Socrates deſerued victorie of vnryghtfull dethe in my preſence. The herytage of the whyche Socrates, the heritage is to ſayne the doctryne, of the whyche Socrates in hys opinyon of felycite, that I cleape welefulneſſe: whan that the people of Epycuriens and Stoiciens, & many other enforced them to go rauiſhe, euery man for hys parte, that is to ſayne: that euerych of hem wolde drawen to the defence of hys opinyon the wordes of Socrates. They as in partye of their praye to drawen me cryenge and debatynge theraye nſt, and coruen and renten my clothes that I had wouen wyth myne owne handes. And wyth tho clothes that they had araced out of my clothes they wenten awaye, wenynge that I had gone wyth hem euerye dele. In whyche Epicuryens and Stoiciens for as moche as there ſemed ſome traces and ſteppes of my habyte: The folye of wenyng tho Epicuryens and Stoiciens my famyliers, peruerted ſome through the errour of the wycked multytude of hem: Thys is to ſayne for they ſemed Philoſophers they were pur-

ſued

ſhed to the derthe and ſkyye. Tho yf thou haſt not knowen the eſtlynge of Anaxagoras, ne the empoyſonynge of Socrates, ne the tur-mentes of Zeno, for they weren ſtraungers, yet myghteſt thou haue knowen the Sene-cas, the Canios, and the Soranes: Of whyche folke the renomme is neyther ouer olde ne vnſolempne. The whyche men no thynge eis ne brought to the derthe, but onely for they were enformed of my maners, and ſemeden moſte vnlyke to the ſtudyes of wyc-ked folke. And for thy thou oughteſt not to wondren, though that I in the bytter ſtre be dryuen wyth tempeſtes blowynge aboute. In the whyche thys is my moſte purpoſe, that is to ſayn to diſpiesen wicked men. Of which thewes all be the hooſte neuer ſo great, it is to diſpyſe, for it is not gouerned wyth no lea-der of reaſon, but it is rauyſhed onely by fle-tynge errour, foliy and ligherly. And yf they ſomtyme make an hooſte ayenſte vs, aſſayle vs as ſtrenger: oure leder draweth togyther hys richeſſes in to hys tour, and they ben en-tenteyfe aboute ſarpleris or ſachelles vnpro-fytable for to taken. But we that ben hygh a-bouen, ſyker frome all tumulte and woode noyſe, warneſtored and enclofed in ſuch a pa-leys, whyther as that clatterynge or anoyeng foly may not attayne, we ſcorne ſuche rauc-ners and henters of foulеſt thynges.

Quiſquis compoſito ſerenus euo,
Nactum ſub pedibus egit ſuperbum:
Fortunamq; tuens vtrãq; rectus,
Inuictum potuit tenere vultum. &c.

Who ſo it be that clere of bertue, ſad, and well ordynate of lyuyng, that hath put vnderfoot the proude wyerdes, & loketh ſtrayght vpon eyther fortune, he maye holden hys chere vn-dyſcomfyted. The rages ne the manaces of the ſee commouynge and chaſynge vnware heate frome the bottome, ne ſhall nat moue that man, ne the vnſtable mountayne that hyght Veſeuus, that wytereth out through hys broken chymeneyes ſmokynge fyres, ne the waye of thonder leyte, that is wonte to ſmyten hygh toures ne ſhall nat moue that man. Wherto than wretches hede ye ty-raunters, that ben wood and felonous wyth any ſtrength? Hope after nothynge, ne drede thou not: and ſo ſhalte thou diſarmen the ire of thylke vnmyghty tyraunte. But who that quakynge dredeth or deſyreth thynge that is not ſtable of hys right, that man that ſo doth hathe caſte alwaye his ſhilde, and is remoued fro his place, and enlaſeth him in the chayne, wyth the whyche he may be drawen.

Sentis ne (inquit) hec atq; animo illabuntur tuo? Expers ne es lyre? Quid fles? Quid lachrymis manas? Si operã medicantis expectas, oportet vt vulnus detegas tuum. &c.



Clyſt thou (q ſhe) theſe thyn-ges? and entren they aught in thy corage? Arte thou lyke an aſſe to the harpe? Why weperſt thou? why ſpyleſt the treres? Yf thou abydeſt after helpe of thy leche, it behoueth diſcouer thy wounde. Tho I had gathered ſtrength in my corage and anſwerde and ſayd, and ar-dely it (q I) of rebethynge or of amonicion, and ſhewed it not enough by hym ſelfe the ſharpneſſe that weyeth woode ayenſt me? He moueth it not the to ſe the face or the maner of thys place? Is this the librarye that thou haddeſt choſen for a ryght certayne ſyege to the in myne houſe, there as thou dyſputeſt oft wyth me of the ſcience of thynges, tou-chynge dyuynite and touchynge mankynde? Was than myne habyte ſuche as it is nowe? was my face or chere ſuche as is now, whan I ſought wyth the ſecretes of nature, whan thou enformedeſt my maners and the reaſon of all my lyfe, to thenſample of the ordre of heauen? Is not thys the guerdon that I re-ferre to the, to whom I haue be obeyſaunt? Certes thou enformedeſt by the mouthe of Plato thys ſentence, that is to ſayne: that comen thynges or compynalteeſ weren bliſ-full, yf they that had ſtudyed all fully to wyſ-dome gouerneden thylke thynges: or elis yf it ſo

to befell that the gouernours of comynal-
tees studden to get wysedome, thou saydest
me by the mouthe of the sayde Plato, that it
was a necessarye cause, wyse men to taken
and desyren the gouernaunce of comen thyn-
ges, for that the gouernemētes of cytes yeft
in the handes of felonous tourmentours,
cytyeins ne shulden not bryngen in pesti-
lence and distruction to good folke. And ther-
fore I folowynge thylke auctours desyred to
put forthe in execution and in acte of comen
administracion thylke thynges, that I had
lerned of the among my secrete restyng why-
les, thou and god that put in the thoughtes
of wyse folke, ben knowynge wyth me, that
nothynge ne brought me to maistrye or dig-
nyte but the comen studye of all goodnesse.
And therfore cometh it that bytwene wyked
folke and me haue ben greuous dyscordes,
that ne myghten not be released by prayers:
for this lyberte hath the fredom of cōscience,
that the wrathe of more myghty folke hathe
alwaye ben dispysed of me for sauacyon
of right. Howe ofte haue I resysted and
withstande that man that bryght Canigast,
that made alway thassaute ayenst the prosper
fortunes of poore feeble folke? Howe ofte the
haue I put of or caste out hym Trigyl pro-
uost of the kynges house, bothe of the wron
ges that he had begonne to done, and the ful-
ly perfourmed? Howe often haue I couered
and defended by ꝑ auctoute of me put ayenst
perils, that is to sayne: put myne auctorite
in peryl for the wretched poore folke that the
cruelte of straungers vsepuyched turmen-
ten alwaye wyth mischeues and greuances
out of nombre? Neuer man yet drowe me
fro right to wrouge. Whan I sawe the for-
tunes and the rychesses of the people of the
prouynces ben harmed and amenused, eyther
by priuy rauynes or by comen tributes or
outrages, as sory was I as they that suffre-
den the harme. Glose. Whan that Theo-
dorike kynge of Gothes in a deed yere had
hys garners full of corne, and commaunded
that no man shulde bye no corne tyll hys cor-
ne were solde, and at a greuous dere price:
Boece wythstode that ordynaunce, and ouer
came it, knowynge all thys the kyng Theo-
dorike hym selfe. Coempcion is to say comen
achate or byenge togyther, that were esta-
blysshed vpon the people by suche a maner
impolycion, as who so bought a busshell of
corne, he muste yeuen the kynge the fyfthe
parte. Tertus. Whā it was in the sore hon-
gry tyme, there was establysshed greuous
and vnprofytable coempcion, that men sene
well it shulde greatlye turmenten and endo-
magen al the prouynce of Campayne. I toke
stryfe ayenst the prouost of the pretoire for
the comen profyte. And the knowynge of it,
I ouercame it, so that the coempcio was not
asked ne tooke effecte.

Paulyne a counsaylour of Rome, the ry-
chesses of the whyche Paulyne the houndes
of the paleys, that is to saye, thoffycers wol-
den haue deuoured by hope and couetyse: yet
drawe I out of the lawes of hem that gape-
den. And for as moche as the payne of the ac-
cusacion auged before ne shulde not so
dayrily henten ne punyschen wrongfully Al-
byne a counsaylour of Rome, I put me ayenst
the hates and indignacions of the accusour
Cipian. Is it not than ynough sens that I
haue purchased great discordes ayenst my
selfe? But I ought be more assured ayenst o-
ther folke, that for the loue of right wysnesse
I neuer reserued nothyng to my selfe to hem
warde of the kynges hall, by whych I were
the more syker. But through the same accu-
sours accusynge I am condempned. Of the
nombre of whyche accusours one Basilius ꝑ
whylom was chased out of ꝑ kynges seruice
is nowe compelled in accusynge of my name
for nede of forayne money. Also Opilion and
Gaudencius haue accused me: Albe it so that
the iustyce regall had whylom demed them
bothe to gone in to exyle for her trecheryes
and fraudes without nombre. To which iud
gement they nolden not obey, but defended
hem by the syhernesse of holy houses, that is
to sayne, fledden in to seyntwary: And than
whan this was apperceyued by the kyng, he
comaunded but if they voyded the cyte of Ra
uenne by certayne daye assigned, that menne
shulde marke hem on ꝑ forheed with an hete
yron, and chasen hem out of the town. Nowe
what thyng semeth might be ysyened to this
cruelte, for certes this same daye was recey-
ued the accusyng of my name by thylke same
accusours. what may be sayd hereto? Hathe
my studye and my counynge deserued thus,
or els the forsayde dampnacion of me made
them ryghtfull accusours or no? Was not

fortune

I had gerythed derth to al good men, algates
fortune a shamed of thys. Certes all had nat
fortune ben ashamed þ innocence was accu-
sed, yet ought she haue had shame of þ frithe
of myne accusours. But ashe thou in some
of what gylte I am accused. Whan sayne
that I wolde flemen the companye of the se-
natours. And desyrest thou to heren in what
maner I am accused, that I shulde haue di-
stourbed the accusoure to bearen letters, by
whyche he shulde haue made the senatours
gylty ayenst the kynges royall mayestie. O
mayistresse, what demest thou of thys. that I
forsake thys blame, that I ne be no shame
to the. Certes I haue wolde it (that is to
saye) the saluacion of the senate, ne I shall
neuer lette to wyne it, and that I confesse
and am a knowe, but thentente of the accu-
soure to ben distourbed shall cease. Shall I
cleape that a felonye or a synne that I haue
desyred the saluacyon of the ordre of the se-
nate. And certes had thylke same senate
doone through her decretes and her iugemē-
tes as though it were a synne and a felonye,
that is to wyne the saluacyon of them. But
solye that lyeth alwaye to hym selfe, maye
not chaunge the meryte of thynges, ne I
trowe not by the iugement of Socrates that
it were lefull to me to hyde the sothe, ne as-
sente to leasynges: but certes howe so euer
it be of this, I put it to gessen or pryson of the
iugement of the and of wyse folke, of whych
thynge all the ordynaunce and the sothe (for
as moche as folke that ben to comen after
oure dayes shall knowen it) I haue put it
in scripture and in remembraunce. For tou-
chynge the letters falsely made, by whyche
letters I am accused to haue hoped the fre-
dome of Rome, what apertayneth me to
speken therof. Of whyche letters the fraude
had ben shewed apertely, yf I had had lyber-
tye for to haue vsed and ben at confessyon of
myne accusours, the whyche thynge in all
nedes hathe great strength. For what o-
ther fredom may men hopen. Certes I wold
fynd some other fredome myght be hoped, I
wolde then haue answerde by the wordes
of a man that hyght Canius: for whan he
was accused of Caryus, Cesar Germanes
sonne, that he was knowynge and consen-
synge of a conjuracion ymade agayns him.
Thys Canyus answerde thus: yf I had
wyste it, thou haddest not wyste it. In this
thynge sorowe hath not so dulled my wyte,
that I playne onely that shrewde folke app-
rayen felonyes agayns vertue, but I wō-
der greatly howe that they maye perfourme
thynges that they haue hoped for to doone,
for why ne wyll ne shrewdenesse that comth
peraventure of oure defaute. But it is lyke
a monstre and a mervayle howe that in the
presente syght of god, maye ben achieued and
perfourmed suche thynges, as euery fel-
nous manne hath conceyued in hys thought
ayenst innocentes. For whyche thynge me
of thy familyers not vnskylfully asked thou.
If god is: whence comen wycked thynges
But all had it ben lefull that felonous folke,
that nowe desyren the bloode and the deth
of al good men, and eke of the Senate, haue
wylned to gone distroyen me, whome they
haue sene alwaye batayllen and defenden
good men, and eke all the senate, that had not
deserued of the fathers (that is to sayne of
the senatours) that they shulden wyll my in-
struction. Thou remembrest wel as I gesse
that whan I wolde doone or sayne any thyng
thou thy selfe alwaye presente ruledest me.
At the eyen of Tyrone whan that the kynge
gredy of comen slaughter, caste hym to trā-
poren vpon all the ordet of the senate the
gylte of hys royall mayestye, of the whyche
gylte that Albyne was accused, wyth howe
great sybernesse of peryll to me, defended I
all the senate. Thou wottest well that I
saye sothe, ne I ne auaunted me neuer in
playsynge of my selfe. For alwaye whan any
wyght receyueth precyous renome in auaun
tynge of hym selfe or hys werkes, he amen-
seth the secree of hys conscience. But nowe
thou mayste well sene to what ende I am
comen for myne innocencye, I receyue payne
of false felonye, for guerdone of verye ver-
tue. And what open confessyon of felonye
had euer iudges so accordaunte in cruelte,
that is to sayne, as myne accusynge hathe,
that eyther errour of mannes wytte, or elis
condicyon of fortune, that is vncertayn to all
mortall folke ne submytted some of hem, that
is to saye, þ it ne enclyned some iuge to haue
pyte or cōpassyon. For all though I had ben
accused that I wold brenne holy houses and
frāgle preestes with wycked swerde, or that
the sen

I had greythed deth to al good mē, algates the ſentence ſhuld haue puniſhed me preſent confeſſed and conuict. But now I am remoued from the cyte of Rome almoſt .M.C. myle, I am wythoute defence dampned to proſcrepcion and to deathe, for the ſtudyes and bountyes that I haue doone to the Senate. But o wel bene they worthy of merite, as who ſaith: nay ther myght yet neuer non of hem be conuicte of ſuche a blame as mine is. Of whyche treſpace myne accuſours ſeen full wel the dignite, for they wolde derken it wyth medlyng of ſome felonye. They baren me on honde and ſayde, that I had polute & defouled my cōſcience wyth ſacrilege for couetyſe of dignitie: and certes thou thy ſelfe that arte planted in me, chaceſt out of the ſiege of my corage al couetiſe of mortal thynges, ne ſacrilege ne had no leaue to haue a place in me before thyne eyen. For thou droppedeſt euerye daye in myne eares and in my thought thyſke commaundement of Pytha goras, that is to ſaye: Men ſhall ſeruen to God, and not to goddes. Ne it was not conuenient ne none nede to take helpe of the foule ſpirites, I that thou haſt ordeigned and ſette in ſuche excellence that thou madeſt me lyke to God, and ourt thys the rygh cleane ſecrete chābre of myne houſe, that is to ſaye my wyfe, and the company of myne honeſte frendes, and my wyues father, as well holy as worthy to be reuerenced for his dedes, defenden me from al ſuſpection of ſuch blame. But oh malice. For they that accuſen me take of the philoſophy leyth of ſo great blame for they trowen that I haue had affynite to maleſice or enchauntement, bycauſe that I am replenyſched and fulfylled wyth thy teachynges and enformed of thy maners. And thus it ſuffyceth not onelye þ thy reuerence ne auayle me naught, but yf thou of thy freedyll rather be blemyſched wyth myne offencion. But certes to the harmes that I haue, there betydethe yet thys encreaſe of harme, that the geſſynge and the iugement of muche folke ne loke no thyng to the deſertes of thynges, but onely to the auēture of fortune, and iudgen that onelye ſuche thynges bene purueyed of God, whyche that temporall wylfulneſſe cōmaūdeth. Boecius. Is thus, that yf a wyght haue proſperite, he is a good mā and worthy to haue that proſperyte, & who ſo hathe aduerſite, he is a wycked man, and God hath forſake hym, and he is worthy to haue that aduerſyte. Thys is the opinion of ſome folke, and therof cometh that good geſſyng fyrſte of all thynge forſaked wretches. Certes it greueth me to thynke rygh nowe in dyuers ſentences that the people ſayth of me: And thus much I ſaye, þ the laſt charge of contraryous fortune is thys, that whan anye blame is layde vpon a catyſe, men wenen that he hathe deſerued that he ſuffrethe And I that am put awaye from good men, and diſpoyled of dignites, and defouled of myname by geſſynge haue ſuffred turmentes for my good dedes. Certes me ſemeth þ I ſe the felonous couynes of wicked mē haboūden in ioy & in gladneſſe: & I ſe that euery lorel chapeth hym to fynde newe fraudes for to accuſe good folke & I ſe þ good folke be ouerthrowen for drede of my peryll, and euery luxurious turmētour dare done al felonye vnpunyſched, and be erated therto by pekes, and innocentes be not onely diſpoyled of ſykernelle, but of defence. And therto me lyſt to crien to god in thys maner.

O ſtelliferi conditor orbis, qui perpetuo nitus ſolio, rapido celum turbine verſas, legemq; pati ſydera cogis, vt nūc pleno lucida cornu Totis fratris obuia flammis condat ſtellas luna minores: Nūc obſcuro pallida cornu Phebo propior lumina pardat. ꝛc

THou maker of þ whele that beareth the ſterres, whyche that arte faſtned to thy perdurable chayre, and turneſte the heuen wyth a rauyſhing ſweyghe, and conſtrayneſte the ſterres to ſuffre thy lawe: ſo that þ mone ſomtyme ſhynyng wyth her ful hornes metynge wyth all the beames of thy ſiſter her brother, hydeth the ſterres þ bene leſſe. And ſomtime whā the mone pale, with her derke hornes approcheth the ſūne leſeth her lyghtes: and þ the euyn ſterre Heſperus, whyche that in the fyrſt tyme of the nyght bryngeth fyrſt her colde aryſynge, cometh eft ayen her vſed courſe, and is pale by the morow at ryſynge of the ſunne, and than relyped Lucifer. Thou reſtrayneſte the daye by ſhorter

dwellynge in the tyme of the coulde wynter that maketh the leaues fall. Thou deuydeſt the fyue partyes of the nyght, when the hote ſommer is comen. Thy myghte attempyeth the vnchaunge ſeaſons of the yere, ſo that ye-phyrus the debonayre wynd beyngeth ayen in ỹ fyrſt ſomer ſeaſon the leues ỹ the winde that hyghte Boreas, hath blowe away in Autumpne, that is to ſayre, the laſt ende of ſommer, and the ſeedes ỹ the ſterre that hyghte Arcturus ſtrowe, be woxen hygh cornes, whā the ſterre Hirius enchaleth hem. There is nothynge vnbounden from thys olde lawe, ne forleteth the werke of hys propre eſtate. O thou gouernour, gouernynge al thynges by certayne ende, why refuſeſt thou onely to gouerne the werkes of men by dewe maner? why ſuffreſt thou, that flyeng fortune tourneth ſo great enterchaunges of thynges, ſo that anoyous payne that ſhulde duly punyſh felons, punyſheth innocentes: And ſolde of wycked maners ſytten in hygh chayres, and annoyeng folke treden (ỹ vnryghtfully) on the neckes of holy mē. And vertue clere ỹ ſhynyng naturelly, is hyde in derke derkeneſſes and the rightful man beareth the payne and the blame of the felons. Ne the forſwerying, ne the fraud couerde and kempt with a falſe colour, ne annoyeth not to chreudeneſſe, the whyche chreudneſſe, whan hem lyſt vſen her ſtrēgth, they retoyſen hem to put vnder hem the ſouerayne kynges, whiche that the people wythout nombre dreden. O thou what ſo euer thou be that knytteſte all bondes of thynges, loke on theſe wretches, erthes, we men that bene not a foule parte, but a fayre parte of ſo great a werke: we bene tourmented in this ſee of fortune. Thou gouernour, wythdrawe and reſtreyne the rauyſching flodes, and faſten and ferme theſe erthes ſtable wyth thylke bonde, wyth whyche thou gouerneſt heauen that is ſo large.

Her wil cōmuno dolore delatraui: illa vultu placido, nihilq; meis querelis mota. Phi. Cum te (inquit) meſtum, lacrimantemq; vidiſſem: ilico miſerum exulemq; cognoui. Sed ỹ id longinquum eſſet exilium. ec.

When I had wyth a continual ſorowe ſobbed or broken oute theſe thynges, the wyth her chere pitible, and nothynge amoued with my complayntes ſayde thus. Whan I ſaye the (quod ſhe) ſorowfull and weppynge, I wyſte anone that thou were a wretche and exyle. But I wyſte neuer howe ferre thyne eryle was, yf thy tale ne had ſhewed it me. But certes al be thou ferre fro thy countrey, thou narte not put oute of it, but thou haſte fayled of thy way and gone amyſſe. And if thou haſte leuer for to wene that thou be put oute of thy countrey, than haſte thou put out thy ſelfe, rather than anye other wyghte hathe, for no wyghte (but thou thy ſelfe) ne myght neuer haue doone that to the: For yf thou remembre the of what countrey thou arte boune, it nys not gouerned by Emperours ne by gouernement of multitude, as weren the countreyes of hem of Athenes, but one Lorde and one kynge, and that is God, that is Lorde of thy countrey, whych that reioyſeth hym of the dwellynge of hys citezeyns and not for to put hem in eryle. Of the whyche Lorde it is a fredome to be gouerned by the bridle of hym and obeye to hys iuſtice. Haſte thou forgotten thylke olde law of thy citye, in the whyche citye it is ordayned and eſtabliſhed, that what wyghte hathe leaue founde therin hys ſeate, or hys houſe than els where, he maye not be exiled by no right from that place. For who ſo that is conteyned wythin the peleys of thylke citye, there is no drede that he may deſerue to be exiled. But who ſo letteth the wyll tenhabyte there he forleteth alſo to deſerue to be a Citezeyn of thylke Citye. So that I ſaye, that the face of thys place ne moueth me not ſomykell, as thyne owne face. Ne I ne aſke nat rather the walles of thy lybiarye, apparayled and wrought wyth ywore & with glaſſe, than after the ſeate of thy thought in whych I put not whyſome bookes, but I put that, that maketh bookes worthy of pryce or precyous: that is to ſayre ſentence of my bokes. And certaynly of thy deſertes beſtowed in comen goodes, thou haſte ſayde ſothe: but after the multitude of thy good dedes thou haſt ſayd frewe. And of the honeſtie or of the falſeneſſe of thynges ỹ bene oppoſed ayenſt

the, thou haste remembred thynges that be knowen to al folke. And of the felonyes and fraudes of thyne accusours, it semeth the to haue touched it forsoth ryghtefully & shortly al myghten tho same thynges better & more plentuously bene couth in the mouthe of the people that knoweth al this. Thou hast eke blamed greatly & complayned of the wrong ful dede of the Senate. And thou hast sorowed for my blame and thou hast wopen for the damage of thy renoume that is apeyred: and thy last sorowe enchased ayen fortune, complaynest the guerdons be not euely yolden to the desertes of folke. And in thy latter ende of thy woode muse, thou praydeste that thylke peace that gouerneth the heuen shulde gouerne the earth. But for that many tribulacions of affections haue assayled the and sorowe and yre and wepyng to drawen the downe ly, as þ art now feble of thought myghty er remedyes ne shullen not yet touchen the, for which we wyllen somdele vsen lyghter medicynes, so that thylke passyons that bene waxen harde in swellynge by perturbations flowyng in to thy thought, mowen waxe esy & soft to receyue the strength of a more myghtye and more egre medicyne by an esyer touchynge.

Cum Phebi radijs graue cancri sidus incaluat, tum qui largo neganti-bus, sulcis semina credidit, elusus Ceresis fide, quarnas pergat ad arbores Nunq̃ purpureũ nemus lecturus violas petas. &c.

Whã that the brey sterre of the Cancre enchaseth by þ beames of Phebus: that is to sayne, whan that Phebus the sonne is in the sygne of the Cancre, who so preueth than largelye hys sedes to þ fyldes that refusen to receiue hem, lette hym gone beggyed of trust that he had to hys corne, to akehornes of okes. If thou wylte gather violettes, ne go thou nat to the purple wodde, whan the feldc chyrlynge agriseth of colde, by the feinesse of the wynde that hyght Aquilone. If thou desyrest or wylte vsen grapes, ne seke thou not a gloutons hande to straynę & pressę the stalkes of the vyne in the fyrst sommer season. For Bacchus the God of wyne, hathe rather yeuē hys yeftes to Autumpne the later ende of sommer. God tokeneth and assigneth the tymes abiyng hem to her proper offyces, ne he suffreth not the shoūdes, which that hym selfe hathe deuided and constrayned to bene ymedled togither: and for thy he that sorteth certayne ordynaunce of doyng by ouerthrowing way, he hath no glad issue or ende of hys werkes.

Primum igitur, pateris ne me pauculis rogationibus statum tue mẽtis attingere, atq; tẽtare, vt quis modus sit tue curationis intelligam. &c.

First woldest thou suffre me to touch and assay the estate of thy thought by a few demaundes, so that I may vnderstande by, the maner of thy curacio. Aske me (quod I) at thy wyll, that thou wolte, and I shall answere. Tho sayde she thus: whether weneste thou (quod she) that thys worlde be gouerned folyshly by happes and fortunes, or els weneste thou that there be in it any gouernement of reason. B. Certes (quod I) I ne trowe nat in no maner that so certayne thynges shulde be moued by fortunous fortune, but I wote well that God, maker and mayster is gouernour of his werke ne was neuer yet daye that myghte put oute of the sothnesse of that sentence. þ. So is it (quod she) for the same thynge sange thou a lytell here before, and bewayledst and wepteste, that onelye men were put out of the cure of God, for all other thynges thou ne douteste not, that they were gouerned by reason. But ough, I wonder certes greatly why þ thou arte sycke, sens that thou arte put in so holsome a sentence: But let vs seken deper. I conjecte that there lacketh I not what. But saye me thys. Sens that thou ne douteste not that thys worlde be gouerned by God, wyth which gouernayle tak. ste thou hede þ it is gouerned. Vnneth (þ I) knowe I the sentence of thy questyon, so that I ne maye not yet answeren to thy demaũdes. I was not discerned (quod she) that there ne fayled

ſomwhat, by whyche the malady of pertur-
bacion is crepte in to thy thought, ſo as the
ſtrẽgthe of thy paſſis ſhyyng is opẽ: but ſay
me thys. Remembrieſt thou what is thende
of thynges: and whyder thentencion of all
kinde tẽdeth. I haue herde tolde it ſometime
(q I) But dyſcrymelle hath dulled my memo
rye. Certes (q ſhe) thou woteſt well whence
al thynges be comen and proceden. I wote
wel (q I) and anſwered, that god is begin-
nynge of al. And howe maye thys be (q ſhe)
that ſens thou knoweſte the begynnynge of
thynges, that thou ne knoweſt nat what is
the ende of thynges, but ſuche ben the cuſto-
mes of perturbation, and thys power they
hanne that they may moue a man from hys
place, that is to ſay, from the ſtabieneſſe and
perfection of hys knowyng, but certes they
maye nat all arace hym, ne alien hym in all:
but I wolde that thou woldeſte anſwere to
this. Remembrieſt thou that thou art a mã
B. why ſhuld I not remembre that (q I)
Ph. Waiſt thou not tel me thã (q ſhe) what
thynge is a man. Iſkeſt thou not me (q I)
whether þ I be a reaſonable mortal beaſte,
I wote well and confeſſe that I am it. wyſt
thou neuer yet þ thou were any other thyng
(quod ſhe). No (quod I). Nowe wel know
I (quod ſhe) other cauſe of thy malady, and
that ryght great: Thou haſt left for to kno-
wen thy ſelfe what thou art, thorow whych
I haue playnly founden the cauſe of thy ma
ladye, or els the entre of recouerynge of thy
heale. For why? For thou arte confounded
wyth forȝetynge of thy ſelfe: For thou ſo-
roudeſte that thou arte exiled of thy propꝛs
goodes. And þ ne wyſte what is thende of
thynges, for thy demeſte thou that felonous
and wyched ne, be myghty and welful: and
for thou haſte forȝeten by whyche gouerne-
mentes the worlde is gouerned, for thy we-
neſt thou that theſe mutacions of fortune fle
ten wythout gouerneur. Theſe ben the cau-
ſes not onlye to maladye, but certes greate
cauſes to deathe: But I thanke the auctour
and the maker of heale, that nature hathe
not al forleten the. I haue great nourylhing
of thyne heale, and that is the ſorȝ ſentence
of gouernaunce of the worlde, that thou by-
leueſt that the gouernyng of it is not ſubiect
ne vnderput to the foly of theſe happes auẽ-
turous but to the reaſonne of god, and ther-
fore dout the nothing, for of this lytle thycke
thyne heate of lyfe ſhall ſhyne. But for as
moch as it is not time yet of falter remedies
and the nature is of thoughtes thus diſcry-
ued, that as ofte as they caſte away ſothe o-
pinions, they clothen hem in falſe opinions.
Of the whych falſe opinions the darkeneſſe
of perturbacion wereth vp, that cõfounded
the bery inſyght. And that derkeneſſe ſhal I
ſomwhat allaye to make thynne and weake
by lyght and meanelyche remedyes, ſo that
after that the darkeneſſe of diſceyuyng thin-
ges be done away, thou may know the ſhy-
nyng of bery lyght.

Nubibus atris cõdita nullum fun-
dere poſſunt ſydera lumen. Qui mare
voluens turbidus auſter miſceat eſtũ
Ultrea dudum, parꝗ ſerenis. ꝛc.

The ſterres couered wyth blacke
cloudes ne mowe yeten adoun
no lyght, yf the trouble wynde
that hight Auſter, turning and
walowyng the ſee medleth the
heate, that is to ſayne the boylynge vp from
the bottome. The wawes that were why-
lom clere as glaſſe, & lyke to the fayre bryght
dayes, withſtant anone the ſyghtes of men,
by the fulch and oꝛdure that is reſolued. And
the fleting ſtreme that reyleth downe duerſ
ly from hygh mountaygnes is arreſted and
reſiſted oft time by thencoũtryng of a ſtone,
that is departed and fallen from ſome rocke
And for thy, if thou wylt loken & deme ſothe
wyth clere lyght, and holden the way wyth
a right path, weyue thou ioy, dryue fro hẽde
ſterne thou hope, ne let no ſoꝛowe approche,
that is to ſayne: Let none of theſe foure paſ
ſions ouerrome or blende the. For cloudye &
darke is thylke thoughte and bounde wyth
bridels, where as theſe thynges reigne.

Explicit liber primus.

Poſt hec pauliſper obticui, at-q
vbi attentionem meam mode-
ſta taciturnitate collegit, ſic er-
oꝛſa eſt. Si penitus egritudinis tue
cauſas, habitumq. ꝛc.

After

After thys she stynte a lytell, & after that she had gadered by a temper stylnesse myne attẽtion, as who so myght sayne thus. After these thynges she stynt a lytle, and she apercey-ued by a temper stylnesse, that I was entẽtyfe to herken her, she began to speake in thys wyse. yf I (quod she) haue vnderstãden and knowen vtterly, the causes and the habite of thy malady, thou languyshest and art defect-ed for desyre & talent of thy rathar fortune. She that yike fortune onely that is chaun-gyd as thou fayneste to thewarde, hathe per-uerted the clerenesse and the estate of thy cou-rage. I vnderstonde the fele or manyfolde colours and disceytes of thylke meruelous monstre fortune, and she vseth full flatteryng familiaryte wyth hem that she enforceth to begyle, so longe, tyl that she confounde with vnsufferable sorowe, hem that she hath lefte in dispayre vnpurueyed. And if thou remem-berest wel the kynde, the maners, and the de-sette of thylke fortune, thou shalt well know that as in her thou neuer ne haddeste, ne hast yhost any fayre thynge: But as I trowe I shal not greatly trauayten to done the remẽ-bren on these thynges. For thou were wont to barteten & dispysen her wyth many wor-des, whan she was blandysshynge and pre-sent, and pursuedeste her with sentences that weren drawen oute of myne entre, that is to say, of myn enformacyon: but no sodayne mutacion ne berydeth not wythout a maner chaungyng of corages. And so it is befal, that thou art a lytyl departed fro the peace of thy thought, but nowe is time that thou drynke and taaste some softe and delytable thinges so ỳ whan they be entred wythin the, it mo-wen make wave to stronger drynkes of me-dicins. Come nowe forth therfore the suasi-on of swetnesse rethoryen, whych that goth ouere the ryght wave, whyle she forsakethe not myne estatutes. And wyth Rethoryke come forthe musyke a damosel of our house, that syngeth nowe lyghter modes or pyola-cions and nowe heuyer. What ayleth the man: what is it that hath cast the into mur-nyng and in to wepyng: I trowe that thou haste sene some newe thynge and vncouthe: Thou wenest that fortune be chaũged aven me, but thou wenestе wronge yf that thou wene alway tho ben her maners. She hath rather kepte as to the warde, her proper sta-bleneste in the chaungynge of her selfe: ryght suche was she flatterde the and dysceyued the, wyth vnlefull lykynges and false wele-fulneste. Thou haste nowe knowen and atteynte the doubtous or double vysage of thylke blynde goddesse fortune. She that yet couerethe and wymplethe her to other folke, hathe shewed her selfe euerye deale to the: If thou apposest her and thinkest that she is good, vse her maners and playne the not, and thou agryfeste her false trecherye, dispyse and caste awaye her that playeth so harmefullye, for she that is nowe cause of so muche sorow to the, shulde be to the cause of peace and of ioy. She hath forsaken the for-sothe, the which that neuer man maye be sy-ker that she ne shall forsaken hym. Glose. But nathleste some bokes haue the text thus Forsoth she hathe forsaken the, ne there nys no man syker that she ne hathe not forsaken. Holdeste thou than thylke welefulneste pre-cyous to the that shall passen, and is present deare worthe to the, whyche that nys not fayethfull for to dwell, and whan she gothe awaye that she bryngeth a wyght in sorow. For sens she maye not be wyth holden at a mannes wyll, she makethe hym a wretche whan she departethe fro hym. What other thynge is flyttyng fortune, but a maner shewynge of wretchenesse that is to come. For it sufficeth not onely to loken on thyng that is present before the eyen of a man, but wis-dome loketh and measureth thende of thyn-ges, and the same chaungynge from one to another, that is to sayne, from aduersyte in-to prosperyte, makethe that the manaces of fortune ne bene not for to dreden, ne the flate-ryng to be desyred. Thus at the last it behoo-uethe the to suffren wyth euen wyll in pa-tience, al that is done wythin the floure of for-tune, that is to say in this worlde, syth thou hast ones put thy necke vnder ỳ yoke of her. For if thou wolt writen a lawe of wending & of dwellyng to fortune, whyche that thou haste chosen freely to bene thy lady: Art thou not wrongfull in that, and makeste fortune wrothe and asper by thyne impacience, and yet thou mayst not chaungen her:

If thou cõmyttest and be takeste thy say-les to the wynde, thou shalte be shoven, nat

thyder that thou woldeste, but whyder that the wynde shoueth the. If thou casteste thy seedes in the feldes, thou shouldeste haue in mynd ỳ the eares ben amonges otherwhile plenteous, & otherwhile bareyn. Thou hast betaken thy selfe to the gouernaunce of fortune, and for thy it behoueth the to ben obeysaunt to the maners of thy lady. Enforceste thou the to aresten or wyth holde the swyftnesse and the sweygh of her turning whele. O thou fole of all mortall fooles, yf fortune began to dwell stable, she ceased than to ben fortune.

Hec cum superba verterit vices dextra, exestuantis more fertur Euripi. Dudū tremendos scena protexit reges humilemq; victi subleuat fallax vultū. Nō illa dura meliores audit, haud curat flectus. &c.

WHyl Fortune wyth a proud ryght hande with turned her chaunging stoundes, she fareth lyke the maners of the boylynge Eurype.

Glosa Euripe is an arme of the see, ỳ ebbeth and floweth, and somtyme the streme is on o syde and somtyme on that other

Text. Shecrewel fortune casteth adoun kinges that whylom weren ydrad, and she discernable enhaunceth vp the humble cheer of hym that is discomfyted, ne the nether hereth ne recketh of wretched wepynges. And she is so harde, that she laugheth & scorneth the wepyng of hem, the which she hath maked to wepe with her trewil. Thus she playeth and thus she proueth her stregthes, and sheweth a great wonder to al her seruaūtes yf that a wyghte is seen welefull, and ouerthrowe in an hour.

Vellem autem pauca tecum Fortune ipsius verbis agitare. Tu igitur an tus postulet animaduerte. P. Quid tu o homo ream me agis quotidianis querelis. &c.

CErtes I wolde pleden wyth the a fewe thynges, vsyng the wordes of fortune: take hede now thy selfe, yf that she aske ryght.

O thou man, wherfore makeste thou me gylty by thine euerye dayes playnynges. what wronge haue I done the? what goodes haue I beraft the ỳ were thyne? Stryue or pleate wyth me before what iudge that ỳ wylt, of the possession, of rychelles, or of dignites, & yf thou mayst shewen me, that euer any mortall man hathe receyued anye of the thynges to bene hys in proper, than wyll I graunt freely, that thylke thynges were thyn whyche that thou askest. whan that nature brought the forth out of thy mothers wōbe I receyued the naked and nedye of all thynges, and I nourished the wyth al my rychelles, and was redye and ententyfe therowe my fauoure to sustayne the: and that maketh the nowe impacient avenst me. And I enuyronned the wyth all habondaunce and shynyng of al goodes, that bene in my right now it lyketh me to wythdrawe myn honde Thou hast had grace as he that hathe vsed forayne goodes. Thou haste no ryghte to playne the, as though thou haddeste vttedy forlorne, al thy thinges why playneste thou tha I haue done the no wronge. Richelles, honours, and such other thinges ben of my right. My seruauntes knowen me for her lady they come wyth me, & departed whan I wende. I dare wel affirme hardely ỳ yf the thinges, of whiche thou playneste that thou hast forlorne had ben thyne, thou ne haddest not lorn hem. Shal I thā be defended only to vse my right. Certes it is lefful to ỳ heuen to make clere dayes & after that to ouercome the same dayes wyth derke nyghtes. The yere hath eke leaue to apparayle the vysage of ỳ erth now wt floures, & nowe with fruite and to cōfounde hem somtyme with rayues and wyth colde. The see hath eke his right to bene somtyme calme and blandyshynge, with smoth water and somtyme to be horrible wyth wawes and wyth tempestes. But couetyse of men, that maye not be staunched shall it bynde me to be stedfaste, sythen that stedfastnesse is vncouthe to my maners. Such is my strength, and such play I play cemenly. I turne the whirlyng whele wyth the tournyng cerkle. I am glad to chaungen the loweste to the hyest, and the hyest to the lowest. worthe vp yf thou wolte, so it be by thys lawe, that thou ne holde not that I do the wronge, thoughe thou descende adowne whan the reasonne of my playe asketh it.

wylle

wist thou nat how Cresus king of Lidiens of which kynge Cyrus was ful sore agast a lyte beforne that this Cresus was caught of Cyrus, and led to the fyre to be brent, but that a rayne discended from heauen that rescowed him? And is out of minde how that Paulus consull of Rome, whan he had taken the kynge of Perciens, weped pytously for the captiuite of the selfe kynge? what other thynge bewayen the cryinge of tragedyes, but onely the dedes of fortune, that with aukewarde stroke ouerturneth the realmes of great nobley. Glose. Tragedye is to sayne, a dite of a prosperite for a tyme that endeth in wretchednesse. Learnedst not thou in Grece whan thou were yonge, that in the entrie or in the seller of Jupiter, there ben couched two tonnes, that one is full of good, that other is ful of harme?

what ryght haste thou to playne, yf thou hast taken more plentously of the good syde that is to sayne, of rychesse and prosperite? And what eke yf I be not al departed from the? what eke if thy mutable yeueth yt right ful cause of hope to haue yet better thynges Natheless, dismaye the not in thy thought And thou that art put in the comune realm of al, ne desyre not to lyuen by thyne owne propre ryght.

Si quãtas rapidis flatibus incitus
Pontus versat arenas: Aut quot stellifer edita noctibus celo sydera fulgent
Tantas fundat opes, nec retrahat manum pleno copia cornu:
Humanum miseras had ideo genus
Cesset flere querelas. ℣c

THoughe plentye goddesse of rychesse hyde a downe with a ful horne, and withdrawe not her hande, as many rychesse as the see turneth vpwarde sandes, whan it is moued with rauyshyng blastes, or els as many rychesses as there shynen bryght sterres in the heuen on the sterry nyghtes: yet for all ymankynde wold not cesse to wepe wretched plaintes. And al be it so, that god receyued her prayers, and yeueth hem as foole large moche golde, and apparayleth couertous folk with noble or clere honours: yet semeth hym haue gotten nothing. But alway cruel rauyne deuourynge all that they haue gotten shewyth other gapynges, that is to say, gapen and desyren yet after more rychesses. what bridles myght withholden to any certayne ende the disordinate couetyse of men, whan euer the rather that it fleeth in large yeftes, the more brenneth in hem the lust of hauyng? Certes he that quakyng and dredfull weneth hym selfe nedy, he nelyueth neuermore ryche.

His igitur, si prosecteo, verbis fortuna loquereetur, quod profecto cõtra hiseeres, non haberes. Ait si quid est, quo querelam tuam iure tueare, profer as oportet. ℣c.

THerfore yf that fortune spake vnto the for her selfe in this maner, for sothe thou ne haddeste not what thou myghtest answere. And yf thou hast any thing wherwith thou mayst ryghtfully defenden thy coplaynte, it behoueth the to shewen: I wol yeuen to yspace to tellen it. Boece. Certaynly quod I than, these ben fayr thynges, and auoyded with homy softnesse of rethorybe and musycke, t only whyle they be heard and sowne in eares, they ben delicious. But to wretches it is a deper felyng of harme, thus is to sayne, that wretches felen the harme, that they suffre more grenously, than the remedyes or ydelytes of these wordes may gladden or comfort hem. So that whan these thynges shunten for to sowne in eares, ysorow that is infet greueth the thought. P. Right so it doth (qthe) For these ne ben yet no remedyes of the maladye, but they bene a maner norysshyng of thy sorowes, that rebell ayenst thy curacion. For whan tyme is I shall moue t anuste such thinges that perten hem ful depe But natheless that thou shalt not wylne to leeten thy selfe a wretche. Haste thou forgeten the nombre and the maner of thy welfulnesse? I speake nat how ythe souereignemen of the cytie toke the in cure, and keping whan thou were orphelyn of father and of mother, and were chosen in affinite or princes of the cytie. And thou begã rather to be lefe and dere, tha for to be a neyghbour, the

which thyng is the mooste precyous kynde of any propinquite or alyaunce that may be who is it that ne sayd tho that thou ne wer ryght welefull, with so great nobley as thy fathers in lawe, and with the chastite of thy wyfe, and with thopportunitie and nobilesse of thy masculyne chyldren, that is to sayne, thy sonnes. And ouer all this (me lyst to pas sen of comē thynges) how thou hadst in thy youth dignityes, that were warned to olde men, but it deliteth me now to comen to the synguler vpheapyng of thy welefulnesse.

Yf any frute of mortall thynges may haue any wyght or pryce of welefulnesse, myghtest thou euer forveten for anye charge of harme that myght befall, the remembrāce of thylke daye, that thou sawe thy two sonnes made counsaylours, and lad togyther from thy house, vnder so greate assemble of senatours, and vnder the blythenesse of the people, and whan thou sawe hem set in the courte in hye chayres of dignities. Thou rethorien or pronouncer of kynges prayseynges deseruedst glory of wyt and of eloquēce whan thou sattynge betwene thy two sonnes counsaylours, in the place that byghte Cyrco, and fulfylleddest the byddyng of the multitude of people that was spradd aboute the with so large prayseynge and laude, as men synge in victorye. Tho yaue thou to fortune as I trowe, that is to saye, tho feodest thou fortune with glorious, and deceyueddest her, whan she acoyed and norysshed the as her owne delyces. Thou bare a wave of fortune a yefte, that is to saye, suche guerdon that she neuer yafe to priuate man wylte thou therfore laye a rekenynge wyth fortune? She hath nowe fyrst twynked vpō the with a wycked eye. Yf thou consydre the nombre and the maner of thy blysses and of thy sorowes, thou mayest nat forsaken that parte yet blysfull. For yf therfore thou weenest thy selfe not welefull, for tho thynges that semeden ioyfull bene passed, there nys not why ꝑ shuldest seme thy selfe a wretche, for thynges that seme now sory, passed also Art thou nowe comen a sodayne geste vnto the shadow or tabernacle of this lyfe: or trowest thou that any stedfastnesse be in mans thynges? whan oft a swyft houre dissolueth the same man, that is to saye, whan the soul departed from the body. For although that selde is there any fayth that fortunous thinges woolde dwellen, yet nathelesse, the laste day of mans life is a maner deth to fortune and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfore what weenest thou darre trecke, yf thou forlette her in dynge, or els that she fortune forlette in flynge awaye.

Cum polophebus roseis quadrigis
Lucem spergere ceperit: Pallet albentes hebetata vultus
Flammis stella prementibus. ꝛc.

When Phebus the sunne begynneth to spred his clerenesse with rosen charyottes, than the sterre dymmed paleth her whyte cheres by the flambes of the sunne, that ouercommeth the sterre lyghte, that is to sayne, whan the sunne is rysen, the daye sterre wexeth pale, and leseth her lyght: For the great lyghtnesse of the sunne, whan the wodde wexeth rodye of rosen floures in the fyrst somer season, through the brethe of the wynde zepherus that wexeth warme, if the cloudye wynde Auster blowe fellyche, than goth awaye layzenesse of thornes. Ofte the see is cleare and calme with mouynge floudes, and ofte the horryble wynde Aquilon moueth boylynge tempestes, and ouerwhelueth the see. Yf the fourme of this worlde is so feldē stable, and yf it turneth by so many entrechaunges: wylte thou than trusten in the tombelynge fortunes of men? wylt thou trowen on flyttyng goodes? It is certayne and establysshed by lawe perdurable, that nothynge that is engendred is stedfaste, ne stable.

Tum ego, vera inquā, cōmemoras
O virtutum omnium nutrix: nec infici
ari possum prosperitatis mee velissimum cursum. Sed hoc est quid. ꝛc.

Than said I thus: O nource of al vertues, thou sayst ful sothe ne I may not forsake ꝑ right swift course of my prosperite that is to sayne, that the prosperitye, ne be comen to me wondre swyftlye and soone

But

But this is a thynge that greatly smerteth me, whan it remembreth me. For in all aduer-sites of fortune the most vnsely kynd of con-trarious fortune is to haue ben welefull. B. But that thou abyest thus (q she) ꝑ turment of thy false opinion, ꝑ mayst thou not right-fully blamen ne aretten to thynges, as who sayth, that thou hast yet many haboudaun-ces of thynges. Certus. For al be it so that the yldè name of auẽturous welfulnesse mo-neth ꝑ nowe it is leful that thou reken with me of how many thynges thou hast yet plẽ-ne. And therfore yf that thylke thynge that thou haddest for more precious in all thy ry-chesse of fortune be kepte to the yet by the grace of god vnwemmed & vndefouled mayst thou than playne ryghtfully vpon the myg-chefe of fortune, sythẽ thou hast yet thy best thynges. Certes yet lyueth in good poynte thilke precious honour of mankynde. Sy-machus thy wyues father, which that is a man made of all sapience, and vertue, the which mã thou woldest bye with ꝑ price of thyne owne lyfe, he bewayleth the wrõges that men do one to the, and not for him selfe. For he lyueth in syckernesse of anye sentence put avenste hym. And yet lyueth thy wyfe, that is attempre of wyt, and passynge other women in clennesse of chastite. And for I wolde closen shortely her bountyes, she is like her father: I tel the, that she lyueth loth of this lyfe, and kepeth to the only her goost, and is al mate and ouercomen by wepynge and sorowe for desyre of the. In the whiche thyng only I mot graũten the, that thy wil-fulnesse is amenused.

what shall I sayne eke of thy two sonnes counsailours, of which as of children of her age there shyneth the lykenesse of the wyfte of her father and of her elde father. And sy-then the soueravne cure of all mortall folke is to sauen her owne lyues, yf thou knowe thy selfe, thy goodes make the more welful for yet bene there thynges dwelled to the warde, that noman douteth that they ne bẽ more derewoorth to the thã thynne owne life.

And for thy, Dryve thy teares, for yet is not euery fortune hateful to thewarde, ne ouer great tempest, ne hath not yet fallen vpõ the whan thyne aneres cleuen fast: that neither wol suffren the cõfort of this tyme present, ne the hope of tyme comming to fallen, ne to faylen. B. And I praye (q I) that faste mote they holden: for the whyles that they holden, howsoeuer that thynges ben, I shal wel fleten forth and escape. But thou may-est well sene how great apparayles, and a-raye, that me lacketh that be passed awaye from me. B. I haue somwhat auaunced & furthered the (quod she) yf that thou anoye not or forthynke not of all thy fortune, as who sayth, I haue somwhat comforted the so that thou tempest not the thus with all thy fortune, sythen thou haste yet thy beste thynges. But I may not suffren thy delices that playnest so wepyng and anguyshous, for that there lacketh somwhat to thy wel-fulnesse. For what man is he that is so sad, or of greate perfyte welefulnesse, that he ne stryueth and playneth on some halfe ayen the qualitie of his estate. for why ful angui shous thing is the condicion of mans goo-des. For eyther it cõmeth not al togyther to a wyght, or els it ne lasteth not perpetuell. For some man hath greate rychesse, but he is asshamed of his vngentyll lynage. And some man is renomed of nobilesse of kynred, but he is enclosed in so greate anguysshe of nede of thynges, that him were leuer that he were vnknowe. And some man abou-deth both in rychesse and nobilesse, but yet he bewayleth his chaste lyfe, for he ne hath no wyfe. And some man is, and selely maryed, but he hath no chyldren, and nomeberly his rychesses to straunge folke. And some man is gladded with children, but he wepeth ful sore for the trespasse of his sonne, or of hys doughter. And for this there ne recorderth no wyght lyghtly to the condicion of hys for-tune. For alwaye to euerye man there is in somwhat, that vnsayed, he ne wote nought or els he dredeth, that he hath assayed. And adde this also, that euery welefull man hath a full delycate felyng: so that but yf all thyn-ges be fallen at his owne wyll, he is impa-cient, or is not vsed to haue none aduersitie, anon he is throwen downe for euerye lyttell thynge. And full lytle thynges ben that that withdrawen the flamme, or the perfection of blysfulnesse fro hem that ben moost fortu-nate. Howe many men trowest thou wolde demen hem selfe to be almoost in heuen, yf they myghten attayne to the leest parte of ꝑ remnant of thy fortune. This same place

that

that thou clepest exyle, is countreye to hem that enhabyten here.

And for thy nothyng wretched, but whā thou weenest it, as who sayth: Thou thy self ne no wyght elis nis a wrecche, but whā he weeneth hym self he is a wrecche by reputacyon of his corage. And ayenwarde: Al fortune is blyssful to a man, by the agreeablytie or by the egalitie of hym that suffreth it. what man is that, that is so welefull, that nolde chaungen his estate whā he hath lost his patience? The swetnesse of mans welefulnesses is spraynt with many bitternesses The whiche welefulnesse, although it seme swete and ioyfull to hym that vseth it, yet maye it not ben withholden, that it ne goeth awaye whan it woll.

Than is it well seene howe wretched is the blysfulnesse of mortall thynges, that nether it dureth perpetuel with hem, that euerye fortune receyuen agreablye or egally, ne it delyteth nat in all to them that bene angwyllyous.

O ye mortall folke, what seke ye than blysfulnesse out of your owne self, whyche is put in your self? Errour and folye confoundeth you. I shall shewe the shortlye the poynt of souerayne blysfulnesse.

Is there any thyng to the more precyous than thy lyfe? Thou wylt answer, naye.

Than, yf it so be that thou arte myghtye ouer thy self, that is to sayne, by tranquyllitie of thy soule, than hastu thynge in thy power, that thou noldest neuer lese: Ne fortune maye not bynemme it the. And that thou mayest knowe, that blysfulnesse ne may not stande in thynges that bern fortunous and temporel, now vnderstande and gather it togyther thus.

Yf blysfulnesse be the souerayne good of nature that lyueth by reason: ne thylke thynge is not souerayne good that may be taken awaye in any wyse.

For more worthye thynge is and more myghtye thynge that maye not be taken awaye. Than sheweth it well that the vnstable chaunge of fortune, maye not attayne to receyue hem blysfulnesse.

And yet moreouer, what man that thys chaungynge welefulnesse leadeth, eyther he woote that it is chargeable, or elis he woote it not. And yf he woot it not, what blysfull fortune maye there be in the blyndenesse of ignoraunce? And yf he woot, that it is chaungeable, he mote alwaye bene adradde, that he ne lese that thynge, that he ne doubteth not but that he maye lesen it. As who sayeth, he mote alwaye be agast, leest he lese that, that he weeneth ryght wel he may lese. For whych the continuell drede that he hath, ne suffreth hym not to be welefull. Or elis if he lese it, he weeneth to be despyyled and forleten. Certes ele that is a full lytle good, that is borne with euen herte whan it is loste, that is to sayne, that men doo more force of the losse, than of the hauynge.

And for as moch as ye thy self art he, to whō it hath be shewed and preued by full manye demonstrations as I woote well, that the soules of menne, ne mowen not dyen in no wyse. And eke syns it is clere and certayne, that fortunous welefulnesse endeth by the deth of the body: it may not be doubted that yf death maye take awaye blysfulnesse, that all the kynde of mortall thyng ne discendeth into wretchednesse by the ende of deth.

And sythen we knowe well, that manye a man hath sought the frute of blysfulnesse, not onely with suffrynge of death, but eke with suffrynge of paynes and tormentes: howe myght than this present lyfe make men blissfull, syns that thylke selfe lyfe ended it ne maketh folk no wrecches.

QUisquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere sedem,
Stabilisq; nec sonori
Aeterni flatibus Euri
Et fluctibus minantem
Curat spernere pontum
Montis cacumen alti
Vitet scrupulas vitet arenas. &c.

WHat maner of folke, wyse and stable that wyll founden hem a perdurable seate, and ne wyl not be caste downe, wyth the loude blastes of the wynde Eu

mes, and wil dispyse the see menasyng with stodes: Letter hym eschewe to buylden on the coppe of the mountaygne, or in the moyst stodes. For yf the fell wynde Auster toucheth the coppe of the mountaygnes with all her strengthes, and the lose sandes refuse to beare the heauy weyghtes.

And for thy, yf thou wylt flyen the perylous auenture, that is to saye, of the worlde, bynde mynde certaynlye to set thyne house of a mery state in a lowe stone.

For although the wynde troublynge the see, shoulde with ouerthrowyng, thou that arte putte in quyete, and welefull, by strength of thy paleys, shalt leade a cleare age, stoynynge the woodnesse and the yres of the ayre.

Sed quoniam rationum iam in te mearum fomenta descendunt, paulo validioribus utendum puto. Age enim. Di iam caduca ac momentaria fortune. &c.

But, for as moche as the nourysshynges of my reason descenden nowe into the, I trowe it wer tyme to vsen a lytle strenger medicens. Now vnderstand here, all were it so, that þ yeftes of fortune ne were not bryttle ne transytorye, what is there in hem that maye be thyne in any tyme? or els that it ne is foule, yf that it be loked and consydred perfectlye. Rychesses ben they precyous by the nature of them selfe, or elles by the nature of the? what is mooste worth of rychesse? is it not golde or myght of moneye assembled? certes that golde and that money shyneth and yeueth better renoume to hem that dispenden it, than to thylke folke that mokeren it: for auarice maketh alwaye muckeres to ben hated, and largesse maketh folke cleare of renoume. For syth that suche thynges as ben transferred from one man to an other, ne maye not dwell with no manne, certes, than is that moneye precyous, whan it is translated in to other folke, and flyten to be hadde by vsage of large yeuynge of hym that hath yeuen it. And also yf al the money that is ouer all in all the worlde, were gathered to warde one man, it shoulde make al other men to be neadye as of that. And certes a voyce all hole, that is to sayne, without amenusyng, fulfylleth together the hearynge of moche folke. And whan they bene ayailed, nedes they maken hem poore, that forgone tho rychesses.

O, straye and nedye clepe I these rychesses, syns that many folke ne maye not haue it all, ne all ne it not comen to one man without pouerte of all other folke. And the shynynge of gemmes, that I call precyous stones, drawe th it not the eyen of folke to hem warde, that is to sayne, for the beautye? But certes, yf there were beautie or bountie in shynynge of stones, thylke clerenesse is of the stones hem selfe, and not of men. For which I wonder greatly, that men maruaillen on suche thynges. For why, what thyng is it, that yf it wanteth mouynge and ioynture of soule and body, that by ryght might semen a fayre creature to hym that hathe a soule of reason? For all be it so, that gemmes drawen to hem selfe a lytle of the lasse beautie of the worlde, thorowe the entente of her creatoure, and the disiunction of hem selfe, yet for as mykel as they ben put vnder your excellencie, they ne haue not deserued by no way, that ye shulde marueilen on hem. And the beauty of feldes delyteth it nat mykell vnto you?

B. why shulde it not delyten vs, syth that it is a ryght fayre portion of the right fayre werke, that is to sayne, of this world? And ryght so ben we gladed somtyme of the face of the see, whan it is clere: And also marueyllen we on the heauen and on the sterres, and on the sonne and on the moone. Bbi. Apperteyneth (q she) any of thylke thynges to the why darest thou gloulye the in the shynyng of any suche thynges? Art thou distynged and embelysed by the spryngynge floures of the fyrst sommer season? Or swelleth thy plentye in frutes of sommer? why arte thou raysshed with ydell ioyes? why embracest thou straunge goodes, as they were thyne? Fortune ne shall neuer make, that such thynges ben thyne, that nature of thynges hath maked forayne from the? Sothe it is, that

without

wythouten doute the fruites of the erth owe to be to the norysshynge of beestes. And yf thou wylt fulfyll thy nede after that it fulfilleth to nature, than is it no nede that thou seke after the superfluitye of fortune. For with full fewe thynges with full lytle thynges nature hathe her apayed. And yf thou wolt achoken the fulfyllyng of nature with superfluitees: Certes, thylke thynges that thou wolt thresten and pouren into nature, shullen be noyfull vnto the, or elis anoyous weneth thou eke, that it be a fayre thynge to shyne with dyuers clothynges? Of whiche clothynge, yf the beautye be agreable to loken vpon, I woll marueylen on the nature of the mater of thylke clothes, or elis on the workeman that wrought hem. Doth also a longe route of meynye make the a blyssful man? the which seruauntes yf they ben vycious of condicions, it is a great charge and distruction to the house, and a great enemye to the lorde hym selfe. And yf they ben good men, how shall straunge and forayne goodnesse be put in the nombre of thy rychesses? So that by all these forsayde thynges, it is clerely shewed, that neuer one of thylke thynges that thou accomptedst for thy goodes, nas not thy good. In which thynges if there be no beautye to be desyred, why shouldeste thou be sory to lose hem? or why shouldeste thou reioyse the to holden hem? For yf they ben fayre of theyr owne kynde, what appertayneth that to the? for also well shoulden they haue been fayre by hem selfe, thoughe they were departed from all thy rychesses. For why? fayre ne precyous were they not, for that they comen amonge thy rychesses. But for they semed fayr and precyous, therfore thou haddest leuer reken hem amóges thy rychesses. But what desyrest thou of fortune with so greate afare? I trowe thou seest to dryue away nede with abundaunce of thynges: but certes it tourneth you all into the contrarye. For why, certes it neadeth of full many helpynges to kepen the dyuersities of precious hostilementes. And sothe it is, that of many thynges they haue nede, that many thynges haue. And ayenwarde, of lytle thynge nedeth hym that measureth his syll, after the nede of kynde, and not after thoutrage of coueitise. It is so than, that ye men haue no propre good sette in you, for suche ye moten seke outwarde in forayne, and subiect thynges. So is than the condicion of thynges turned vp so downe, that a man that is a deuyne beest, by meryte of his reason, shyneth that hym selfe wys neither fayre ne noble, but yf it be through possessiō of hostilimētes, that ne han no soules: And certes, all other thynges ben apayed of her owne beauties: But ye men that be semblable to god by your reasonable thought beren to apparayen your excellent kynde of lowelle thynges. Ne ye vnderstonden not how greate a wronge is done to your creatour: For he wolde that mankynde were most worthy and noble of any erthly thyng and ye thresten downe youre dignitees benethen the lowest thynges.

For yf that all the good of euerye thynge be more precyous, than is thylke thynge, whose that the good is, syth ye demen that the foulest thynges ben youre goodes: than submytten ye, and put your selue vnder the foulest thynges by your estimation: and certes this betydeth not without youre desert. For certes, suche is the condition of all mankynde, that onelye whan it hath knowynge of it selfe, than passeth it in nobleesse all other thynges. And whan it forgetteth the knowinge of it selfe, than it is broughte benethen all beestes. For why, all other lyuynge beestes han of kynde to knowen nat hem selfe. but whan that men letten the knowynge of hem selfe, it commeth hem of vyce. But how blode sheweth the errour and the folye of you men, that weenen that any thynge may ben apparayed with straunge apparelmentes but forsoth that may not be done. For yf a wyght shyneth with thynges that ben put to hym: Is this yf thylke thynges by nem with whiche a man is apparelled: Certes thylke thynges ben commended, and prayised, with whiche he is apparelled, but nathelesse, thynge that is coueted and wrapped vnder that, dwelleth in his fyrth. And I denye that thylke thyng be good, that anoyeth hym that hath it. Sad I of this? Thou wolt saye naye. Certes, ryches haue anoyed full oft hem that han had the rychesse: sythe that euerye wycked thewe is for his wyckednesse the more gredye after other folkes rychesses, whereseuer it be in any place, be it golde or precious stones, and weneth hym only

aye most worthy that hath hem. Thou thā that so besy diedest now the swerde and the speare, yf thou haddest entred in the paths of this lyte auoyde wayfaryng man, than woldest thou syng before the theef, as who saith a poore man that beareth no rychesse on him by the waye, may boldly syng before theues for he hath nat wherof to be robbed. O precyous and ryght clere is the blysfulnesse of mortall richesses, that whan thou hast goten it, than hast thou lorne thy seekernesse.

Felix nimium prior etas, Contenta fidelib⁹ aruis, Nec inerti perdita luxu Facili que sera solebat Ieiunia solue re glande, Nec bacchia munera norat Liquido confundere melle, Nec lucida vellera serum. &c.

SElysfull was the fryste age of men, they helden hem apayde wyth the metes that ỳ trewe feldes brought forth, they ne distroyed nor disceyued nat hem selfe wyth outrage, they weren wonte bytyme to slaken her hunger at ewyn wyth akehornes of okes, they ne coude nat medel ỳ yefte of Bacchus to the clere honȳ, that is to sayne they coude make no pyement or clarre: Ne they coude nat medell the bryght fleeces of the countre of Seryens wyth the venym of Tyry, thys is to sayn, they coude nat dyen wolle fleeces of Syryen coulre wyth the blode of a maner shellysh, that men fynden in Tyne, wyth which blode men dyen purple, they slepten holsome slepes vpon the grasse, and dronken of the rennyng waters, and lyen vnder the shadowes of the hye Pyne trees. Ne no geste or straunger ne caste yet the hye see wyth oores or wyth shyppes, ne they ne hadden seyn yet no newe strondes to leden marchaundyse in to dyuers countrees. Tho weren the cruel clarions full hust and full styl. Ne blode yshad by egre hate ne had deyed yet armures. For where to or whiche woodnesse of enemyes wolde fryst mouen armes, whan they sawen cruell woundes, ne none meedes be of blode yshad. I wolde that oure tymes shulde turne ayen to tholde maners. But the anguishous loue of hauyng in folke burneth more cruelly than the mountayn of Ethna, that ay bȳneth. Alas, what was he that first dalfe vp the gobbettes or the weyghtes of golde, couered vnder erthe, and the precious stones that wolden haue be hydde. He dalfe vp precious peryls, that is to sayne, that he that hem fyrst vp dalfe, he dalfe vp a precious peryll, for why, for the preciousnesse of suche thyng hath many man ben in peryll.

Quid autem de dignitatibus, potentiaq; differam, quas vos, vere dignitatis, ac potestatis inscii, celo exequatis. Que si in improbissimum quemq; ceciderint. &c.

WHat shall I saye of dignytees and powers, the whiche ye men that neyther knowen very dignyte ne very power, areysen hem as hyghe as the heuen: the whyche dignytes and powers, yf they comen to any wycked mā they done as great domages and distructions, as dothe the flambe of the mountayne Ethna, whā the flambe walweth vp, ne no deluuy ne dothe so cruell harmes. Certes ye remembre wel (as I trow) that thylke dignyte that men cleape the imperye of counsaylours, the whyche whylom was begynnyng of fredom, your elders coueyted to haue done away that dignyte for the pryde of the counsaylours. And ryght for that same poure elders before that tyme had done awaye out of the eyte of Rome the kynges name, that is to sayne, they nolde haue no lenger no kynge. But nowe, yf so be that dignytees and powers ben yeuen to good men, the whyche thyng is full selde, what agreable thynges is there in tho dignytees and powers, but onely the goodnesse of folke that vsen hem. And therfore is it thus, that honour cometh not to vertue bycause of dignyte: and ayenwarde, honoure cometh to dignyte for cause of vertue. But whiche is thylke your deserwoorth power that is so clere and so requyrable. O ye erthlye beestes, consyder ye not ouer whyche thynge that it semeth that ye haue power. Nowe yf thou sawe a mouse amonge other myce, that chalenged to hym selfwarde right and power ouer all other myce, howe greate

leyne wolde thou haue of it. Glosa. So fareth it by men, the bodye hathe power ouer the bodyes of yf thou loke well vpon the body of a wight, what thyng shalt thou fynd more freel than is manhynde. the whyche men ful ofte be slayne by bityng of flyes, or eis wyth entryng or crepyng wormes in to the priuytees of mannes bodye. But where shall men fynden any man that may exercisen or haunten any ryght vpon an other man, but onely on hys bodye, or eis vpon thynges that ben lower than the body, the whiche I clepe fortunes possessyons.

Wayste thou haue euer any commaundemẽt ouer a free corage. Wayste thou remeue fro the estate of hys propre reste, a thought that is cleuynge togyder in hym selfe by stedfast reson.

As whylom a tyraũt wened to confounde a free man of corage, he wende to constrayn hym by tourmentes, to maken hym discoueren and accusen folke, that wysten of a coniuracyon, whyche I cleape a confederacye that was caste ayenst thys tyraunt: but thys freman bote of hys owne tonge, and caste it in the vysage of thylke woode tyraunt. So that the turmentes that this wood tyraũt wende to haue made matter of cruelte, thys wyse mã made it matter of vertue. But what thynge is it that a man maye do to an other man, that he ne maye receyuen the same thyng of other folke in hym selfe. Or thus: what maye a man don to folke, that folke ne maye doone to hym the same. I haue herde telde of Busirides that was wonte to sleen hys gestes, that herbroden in hys house: and he was slayne hym selfe by Hercules that was hys geste. Regulus had taken in batayle manye men of Affryke, and caste hem into fetters: but sone after he muste yeuen hys handes to be bounde wyth the cheynes of hem that he had whylom ouercomen. Weneste thou than, that he be myghty that hath power to doone a thyng, that other ne maye done in hym that he hathe in other. And yet more ouer, yf so were that these dignytes or powers hadden any propre or naturel goodnes in hem, neuer nolde they comen to shrewes. For contrarye-ous thynges ne ben wont to ben yfeloushyp-ped togyther. Nature refuseth that contrarye-ous thynges ben toyned. And so as I am in certayne that wicked folke haue dignytees ofte tyme, thã sheweth it wel that dignytes & powers ne ben not good of her owne kynde, sens that they suffren hem selfe to cleauen & toynen hem self to shrewes. And certayne the same thyng may I moste dignely iugen and sayne of all the yeftes of fortune, that moste plenteously comen to shrewes, of whiche yeftes I trow it ought be consydred that no mã douteth that he is stronge, in whome he seeth strength: and in whom swyftnesse is, sothe it is that he is swifte. Also musyke maketh musyciens, and physike maketh physiciens, and rethorike eke rethoriciens. For why, the nature of euery thynge maketh hys propertye, ne it is not entremedled wyth theffecte of contrarye-ous thynges. But certes ryches may not restrayne auarice vnstanched. Ne power ne maketh nat a man mighty ouer hym selfe, which that vicious lustes holden distrayned wyth chaynes that ne mowẽ not be vnbounden. And dignitees, that be yeuen to shrewde folke, not only ne maketh hem not digne, but sheweth rather all openly, that they den vnworthy & indigne. And it is thus. For certes ye haue loye to cleape thynges with false names, that bearen hem in al the countraye, the which names ben ful ofte reproued by the effecte of the same thynges. So that these like rychesses ne oughte not by right to be cleped rychesses, ne suche power ne ought not to be cleped power, ne suche dignyte ne ought not to be cleaped dignyte. And at laste I may cõclude the same thynge of all the yeftes of fortune: In whyche there nys nothyng to be desyred, ne that hath in him selfe naturel bountye, as it is well yscne, for neyther they toyne hem not alwaye to good men, ne maken hem alwaye good, to whom they ben toyned.

Nouimus, quantas dederit ruinas
Urbe flammata, patribusq; cesis,
Fratre qui quondã ferus interempto,
Matris effuso maduit cruore.
Corpus & visu gelidum pererrans,
Dira non tinxit lachrymis: sed esse,
Censor extincti potuit decoris. &c.

We haue wel knowen, howe many great harmes and distructions were doone by themperour Nero. He lete brennen the cyte of Rome, and made slee the senatours, and he

and he cruell whylō slough his brother. And he was made moyste wyth the bloode of hys mother, that is to saye, he let sleen and slytten the wombe of hys mother, to sene where he was conceyued, and he loked on euery halue of her deed colde body, ne no teere wette hys face, but he was so herd herted that he might be domes man or iuge of her deed beautye. And natheleſſe yet gouerned thys Nero by ſceptre all the people that Phebus maye ſene commyng fro his vereſt aryſyng, tyl he hyde hys beames vnder ꝑ wawes, that is to sayne he gouerned all the peoples by ſceptre impe-ryall, that the ſonne gothe aboute fro Eeſt to weſt. And eke thys Nero gouerned by ſceptre all the peoples that be vnder the colde ſterris that hyghten the Septentrions: that is to sayne, he gouerned al the peoples that be vn-der the partye of the Nouthe. And eke Nero gouerned all ꝑ peoples that ꝑ violent wynde Nothus ſaorelyth and baketh the bzennyng ſandes by hys due heate, that is to saye, all the peoples in the Southe. But yet ne might not all hys power tourne the woodneſſe of thys wycked Nero. Alas it is a greuous for-tune, as ofte as a wycked ſwerde is ioyned to cruel venum, that is to say, venemous cruelte to lozdſhyppe.

Tum ego. Scis (inq̄) ipſa, minimū nobis ambitionem mortalium rerum fuiſſe dominatam. Sed materiam ge-rendis rebus optauimus, quo ne vir-tus tacita conſeneſceret. ꝑ. Et illa. Atqui hoc vnum eſt. ꝛc.

Thā ſayd I thus. Thou woteſt wel thy ſelfe, that the couetyſe of mozrall thynges ne hadden neuer lozdſhype in me. But I haue wel deſyred mater of thi ges to doone, as who ſayth, I deſyre to haue mater of gouernaunces ouer comynaltees, foz vertue ſtyll ſhulde not el-den: that is to sayn, that leſte er that he wert olde, hys vertue that laye now ſtyll, ne ſhuld not perylhe vnexercyſed in gouernaunce of commune: foz whyche men myght ſpeken oz wzyten of hys good gouernement. ꝑ.

Forſothe (ꝙ ſhe) and that is a thynge that may drawen to gouernaunce ſuche hertes as ben wozthy and noble of her nature: But na-theleſſe it maye not drawen oz tellen ſuche hertes as ben ybrought to the full perfection of vertue, that is to sayne couetyſe of glozye and renome, to haue wel admuniſtred the cō-mune thynges, oz doone good deſertes to pro fyte of the cōmune. Foz ſe nowe and conſy-der, howe lytell and howe voyde of all pryce is thylke glozye, certayne thynge is as thou haſte lerned by the demonſtracion of Aſtro-nomye, that all the enuyzonnyng of the erth aboute, ne halte but the reaſon of a pricke, at the regarde of the greatneſſe of the heuē, that is to sayn, that yf here were maked compari-ſon of the erth to the gretneſſe of heuen, men wolde iudgen it all that ne helde no ſpace. Of the whyche lytell regyon of this wozlde, the fourthe parte of the erthe is inhabyted wyth lyuynge beeſtes that we knowen, as thou haſte thy ſelf ylerned by Ptholome that prouyth it. And yf thou haddeſt wythdrawen and abated in thy thought foz thylke fourthe partye, as moche ſpace as the ſee and the ma-reys conteynen and ouergone: as moch ſpace as the regyon of drought ouerſtretcheth, that is to sayne ſandes and deſertes, well vnneth ſhulde there dwellen a ryght ſtrayte place to the habitacion of men. And ye that be enuy-ronned and cloſed wyth the leſte pryche of thylke pryche, thynken ye manifeſten oz pu-blyſhen your renome and doone youre name foz to ben borne forthe. But your glozie that is ſo narowe and ſo ſtrayte thzongen in to ſo lytell boundes, howe mykell conteyneth it in larges and in great doynge. And alſo ſette therto, that manye a nacyon diuers of tonge and of maners, and eke of reaſon of her ly-uyng, ben inhabyted in the cloſe of thylke ha-bytacle, the whyche nacyons what foz diffy-culte of wayes, and what foz diuerſyte of lan gage, and what foz defaulte of vnuſage, and entrecomunyng of marchaundyſe: not onely the names of ſynguler men ne may not ſtret-chen, but eke the fame of cyties may not ſtret-chen. At the laſte, certes in the tyme of Marc is Tullius as hym ſelfe wytte in hys boke that the renome of the commune of Rome ne had not yet paſſed ne clomben ouer the moun tayne that hyght Caucaſus, a yet was Rome wel waren and redoubted of the Parthes,

and eke of other folke enhabytynge aboute. Seeſt thou not than howe ſtrayte and howe compreſſed is thylke glorie that ye trauayleu aboute to ſhewen and to multeplye? Maye than the glorye of a ſynguler romayne ſtretche thyder as the fame of the name of Rome maye not clymben ne paſſen? And eke ſeeſt thou not that the maners of diuers folke and her lawes ben dyſcordaunte amonges hem ſelfe, ſo that thylke thynge that ſome men iuge worthy of prayſing, other folke iuge that, that is worthy of tourment? And herof cometh it that though a man delyteth hym in prayſynge of hys renome, he maye not in no wyſe bryngen forth ne ſpreden hys name to manye maner peoples, and therfore euerye man ought to be apayde of hys glorye that is publyſhed among hys owne neyghbours, and thylke noble renome ſhall be reſtayned wythin the bounder of the maner folke. But howe many a man that was ful noble in his tyme, hath the wretches and nedy forgetyng of wryters put out of mynde and done away all be it ſo that certes thylke thynges ſhoryten lyteil, the whyche thynges and writynges longe and derke elde do away bothe hem and eke her auctours. But ye men ſemen to getten you a pardurabylite whan ye thynke in tyme comynge fyoure ame ſhall laſten. But natheleſſe, yf thou wylte make comparyſon to the endeleſſe ſpaces of eternyte, what thyng haſte thou, by whyche thou mayſt reioyſen the of longe laſtynge of thy name? For yf there were made comparyſon of the abydyng of a moment to ten thouſande wynter, for as moche as bothe tho ſpaces ben ended, for yet hathe the momente ſome porcion of it all though it be lyteil? But natheleſſe thylke ſelfe nombre of yeres, and eke as many yeres as therto may be multyplyed, ne may not ceſſe be cliparyſoned to the perdurabylite that is endeleſſe. For of thynges which that haue ende may be made comparyſon, but of thynges whiche that ben withouten ende, to thinges that haue ende may be maked no comparyſon. And for thy is it þ all though renome as of longe tyme as euer the lyſte to thynke, were thought, to the regarde of the eternyte that is vnſtaunncheable and infynite, it ne ſhulde not only ſeme lyteil, but playnly ryght nought. But ye ſemen certes ye can do nothyng a ryght but yf it be for the audyence of the people, and for ydle rumours. And ye ſet laiten the great worthynelle of conſcience & of vertue, and ye leiten your guerdones of the ſmall wordes of ſtraunge folke. Haue nowe here and vnderſtand in the lyghtnelle of ſuch pryde and veyne glorie, howe a man ſhoulde leſtynally and meryly ſuche vanyte. Whylome there was a man that had allowed with ſtryuynge wordes an other man, the whyche not for vſage of verye vertue, but for proude vayne glorie, had taken vpon hym falſely the name of a philoſopher. This rather and that I ſpake of, thought he wolde alleye, whether he thylke were a philoſopher or no, that is to ſaye, yf that he wolde haue ſuffred lightly in patience the wronges that were done to him. Thys layned philoſophre toke patience a lyteil whyle: and whan he had receyued wordes of outrage, he as in ſtryuynge ayen and reioyſynge of hym ſelfe, ſayde at laſte thus. Vnderſtandeſt thou not, that I am a philoſophre? That other man anſwerd agayne bytyngly and ſayd: I had well vnderſtande it, yf thou haddeſt holden thy tonge ſtyll. But what is to theſe noble worthy men, for certes of ſuche folke ſpeke I that ſetten glorye wyth vertue. What is it (ꝙ he) what attyrneth fame to ſuche folke, whan the body is reſolued by the derthe at the laſt? for yf ſo be that men dyen in all, that is to ſay body and ſoule, the whyche thynge oure reaſon defendeth vs to byleue: than is there no glorie in no wyſe. For what ſhulde thylke glorye be, whan he, of whome thylke glorye is ſayde to be, nys nyght naught in no wyſe. And yf the ſoule whyche that hathe in it ſelfe ſcience of good werkes, vnbounden fromme the priſon of therthe, wenden, freely to the heuen dilyteth it not than all erthlye occupacyon, and beynge in heuen reioyſeth that it is exempt from all erthly thynges as who ſayth, than recketh the ſoul neuer of no glorie of renome of thys worlde.

Quicunqz ſolam mente præcipiti petit,
Dummumqz credit gloriam,
Late patentes etheris cernat plagas,
Artumqz terrarum ſitum,
Breuem repiere non valentis ambitum &c.

Who

Who so that with ouerthrowing thought onely seketh glorye of fame, and weneth that it be soueraine good, let him loken vpō the brode shewynge countreys of ꝑ heuē, & vpō the straye seete of this erthe, and he shal be ashamed of thencrese of hys name, that maye not fulfyll the lytell compas of the erthe. O what coueyten proude folke to lyften by her neckes in ydle in the deedly yoke of thys worlde? For all though that renome yspradd passyng to forne peoples, goth by diuers tonges, & all though great houses of kynredes shynen by ciere tytles of honours, yet natheleſſe deth dispyteth all hygh glorye of fame, and dethe wrappeth togethers the hygh herdes and the lowe, and maketh egall and euen the hyeſte wyth the lowest.

Where wonné nowe the bones of trewe Fabricius? what is nowe Brutus, or sterne Caton? The thynne fame yet lastyng of her ydle names, is marked wyth a fewe letters. But all though that we haue knowen the fayre wordes of the fame of hem, it is not yenen to knowe hem that ben deed & consumpt. Lyggeth than styll all vtterly vnknowable, ne fame ne maketh you not knowe. And if ye wene to lyue the lenger for wynde of youre mortall name, whan one cruell daye shall rauyshe you: than is the seconde dwellynge to you close. The fyrſte dethe he clepeth here the departyng of the body, and the seconde dethe here the styntynge of the renome of fame.

Sed ne me inexorabile contra fortunam gerere bellum putes, est aliquando, cum de hominibus fallax illa non nihil bene mereatur: tum scilicet cum se aperit. ꝛc.

But for as moch as thou shalt not wené (q̄ she) that I beare an vnretrable batayle ayenſt fortune, yet somtyme it befalleth that she (deceyuable) deserueth to haue eyght good thanke of men: and that is whan she her selfe openeth, and whan she discouereth her frōte, and shewith her maners. Peraventure yet vnderstandeſt thou not that I shall saye. It is a wondre that I desyre to tel, and therfore vnneth maye I vnplyten my sentence wyth wordes. For I deme that contrarye fortune profyteth more to men than fortune debonayre. For alwaye whan fortune semeth debonayre, than she lyeth falsly, byhetyng the hope of welfulneſſe. But forsothe contrarye fortune is alway sothfaſte, whā she sheweth her selfe vnstable through her chaungyng. The amiable fortune deceyueth folke: the contrarye fortune teacheth. Thamyable fortune blyndeth with ꝑ beautie of her falſe goodes, the hertes of folkes that vſen hem. The contrary fortune vnbyndeth hem, with the knowynge of freele welefulneſſe. Thamyable fortune mayſt thou sene alway wynnyng and flowynge, and euer myſknowynge of her selfe. The contrary fortune is attempre and restrayned and wyſe, throwe exercise of her aduerſyte. At the laſte amyable fortune wyth her flatteryinges, drawith myſwandrynge men fro the souerayne good: the contrarye fortune leadeth ofte folke ayen to sothfaſte goodes, and haleth hem ayen as wyth an hoke. Weneſt thou than that thou oughteſt to leten this a lytell thyng, that this slyde and horrible fortune hathe dyſcouered to the, the thoughtes of thy trewe frendes? For why, thys ylke fortune hathe departed and vncouered to the bothe the certayne vysages, and eke the doutous vysages of thy felowes. Whan she departed away fro the she toke away her frendes and laft the thy fendes. Now whan thou were ryche and welefull, as the semed, wyth howe mykel woldeſt thou haue bought the full knowynge of this that is to sayne, the knowynge of thy verye frendes? Nowe playne the not than of rychelle lorne, syth thou haſte founde the moſte precyous kynde of rychelle, that is to sayne, thy very frendes.

Quod mundus stabili fide, Conexos variat vices, Quod pugnācia semina, Fedus perpetuum tenent. ꝛc.

That the world with stable fayth varyeth accordable chaungynges, that the contrarye qualitees of elementes holde amonge hem selfe alyaunce perdurable,

that Phebus the sonne wyth hys golden charyot bryngeth forth the rosy day, that the moone hath commaundement ouer the nyghtes: wheych nyghtes Esperus the euen sterre hath, that þ se gredy to flowen constrayneth wyth a certayne ende hys floodes, so that it is not lefull to stretche hys brode termes or boundes vpon the erthe: Al this ordynaunce of thynges is bounden wyth loue, that gouerneth erthe and see, and also hath cómaundement to the heuen. And yf thys loue slaked the bridels, all thinges that nowe louen hem togythers wolden make batayle cótinuelly, & stryuen to fordone the facion of this world, the whyche they nowe leden in accordable faith, by fayre mouynges. This loue holdeth togyder people ioyned wyth an holye bonde, and knytteth sacrament of mariage of chaste lours. And loue endeth lawes to true feiawes. O welefull were mankynde yf thylke loue that gouerneth the heué, gouerned your corages.

Here endeth the seconde boke, and foloweth the thyrde.

IAm cantum illa finierat, cum me audiendi auidum, stupétemq; arrectis adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo defixerat. Itaq; paulo post O inquam summum lassorum solamé animorum, quantum me. &c.

BY thys she had ended her songe: whá the swetnesse of her dyte had through pereed me, that was desyrous of herkening. And I astonyed had yet streyght myne eeres, þ is to sayne to herken the bette what she shulde saye, so that a lyttell here after I sayde thus. O thou that arte souerayne comforte of corages anguishous, so thou hast remounted and norusshed me with the weight of thy sentences, & wyth delyce of syngyng, so that I trowe not that I be vnperegal to the strokes of fortune as who sayth, I dare well nowe sustren all thassautes of fortune, and well defende me from her. And tho remedies, which that thou saydest here beforn, that weren ryght sharpe, not only that I am not agreysen of hem nowe, but I desyrous of herynge, aske greatly to heren the remedyes. Than sayde she thus. That feled I well (q she) whan that thou ententyfe and syl, rauyshedest my wordes: and I abode tyl thou haddest suche habyte of thy thought, as thou hast nowe, or els tyll that I my selfe had maked it to the same habyte, whiche that is a more very thynge. And certes the remenante of thynges that ben yet to say ben suche, that fyrst whan men taste hem they ben bytynge: But whan they ben receyued wythin a wyght, than ben they swete. But for thou sayest that thou art so desyrous to herken hem, wyth howe great diligence wouldest thou glowen, yf thou wystes whyder I wolde leden the. B. whyder is that (q I) þ. To thylke very blyssfulnesse (q she) of which thyne herte diemeth. But for as moch as thy syght is occupyed and dissolued of erthly thinges, thou mayst not yet sene thylke selfe welefulnesse. B. Do (q I) and shewe me what thylke very welefulnesse is, I praye the without taryeng. þ. That wol I gladly don (q she) for cause of the. But I wol fyrste marken by wordes, and I wyl enforcen me to enfourme the thylke false cause of blyssfulnesse, wheych that thou more knowest: so that whá thou haste beholden thylke false goodes, and turned thyne eyen so to that other syde, thou maye knowen the clerenesse of very blyssfulnesse.

Qui serere ingenuum volet agrū, Libret arua pruis fruticibus. Val. e rubos, falcemq; resecat. &c.

WHo so wol sowe a felde plenteous, let hym fyrste delyuer it of thornes, and kerue a sonder wyth hys hoke the bushes and the ferne, so that the corne may come benyng of eres & of grayues. Hony is þ more swete yf mourthes haue fyrst tasted sauours that be wycke. The sterres shinen more agreably, whan the wynde Nothus letteth hys plungye blastes. And after that Lucyfer the daye sterre hathe chased away the darke nyght, the daye the fayrer leadeth the rosen horse of the sonne. And

ryght so thou, beholdynge fyrste the false goodes begyn to wythdrawe thy necke fro the earthly affections, & afterwardes the verye goodes shullen entren into thy corage.

Tum defixo paululum vultu, et velut in angustam sue mentis sedem recepta, sic cepit. O. Omnis mortalium cura quã multiplicium studiorum labor exercet. &c.

Tho fastened she a lytell the syght of her eyen, & she wyth drewe her syght, as it were in to the strayte seete of her thought: and began to speke ryght thus. All the cures (q) be of mortall folke, whych þ trauayleñ hem in many maner studyes, gone certes by dyuers wayes: but natheleſſe they enforcé hem all to comen onely to thende of blyſſulneſſe. And blyſſulneſſe is ſuche a good, that who so hath goten it, he ne maye ouer that thynge more deſyre. And thys thynge forſoth is ſo ſouerayne good, that it conteyneth in hym ſelfe all maner of goodes, to the whyche good yf there fayled any thynge, it myght not ben ſouerayne good, for then were ſome good oute of thys ſouerayne good, that myght be deſyred. Nowe is it clere and certayne, that blyſſulneſſe is a parfyte ſtate, by the congregacion of all goodes, the which blyſſulneſſe as I haue ſayd, all mortall folke enforcen hem to get by dyuers wayes. For why the couetyſe of euery good is naturelly planted in the hertes of men: but the myſwandrynge errours, wulleth hem into falſe goodes. Of þ which men ſome of hem wené that ſouerayne good be to lyuen without néde of any thynge. And other men demen, þ ſouerayne good be ryght dygne of reuerence, and enforcen hem to be reuerenced amõge her neyghbours by the honours that they haue gotten. And ſome folke there ben that holden that ryghte hye power be ſouerayne good, & enforcen hem for to reygnen, or els to toynen hem to hem that reygné. And it ſemeth to other folke, that nobleſſe of renome be the ſouerayne good, & halten hem to getten hem glorious name by the artes of warre or of peace. And many folke meſuren and geſſen, that ſouerayne good be ioye and gladneſſe, and wenen that it be ryght blyſſful thyng to plũgen in voluptuous delytes. And there ben ſome folke, that entrechaungen the cauſes and þ endes of theſe forſayd goodes: As they that deſyren rycheſſes to haue power & delites, or els they deſyre power for to haue money, or for cauſe of renõme. In theſe thynges and ſuche other is tourned al the entencion of deſyrynges and werkes of mẽ, as thus: Nobleſſe and fauoure of people, which that yeueth to al men, as it ſemeth hem, a maner clereneſſe of renomme: and wyfe & chyldren, that mẽ deſyren, for cauſe of delyte and mernneſſe. But forſoth frendes ne ſhullen not be rekened amõge the goodes of fortune, but of vertue, for it is a full holy maner thynge. All theſe other thynges forſoth be taken for cauſe of power, or els for cauſe of delyte. Certes nowe am I ready to referren the goodes of the body, to theſe forſayd thynges abouen. For it ſemeth that ſtrength and greatneſſe of bodye yeuen power and worthyneſſe, & that beaute and ſwyftneſſe yeuen glorye and renomme: and helth of bodye ſemeth to yeuen delyte. In all theſe thynges it ſemeth onely that blyſſulneſſe is deſyred: for why, thylke thynge that euerye man deſyreth moſte ouer all thynges, he demeth that it be ſouerayne good. But I haue dyſtyned, that blyſſulneſſe is ſouerayne good, for whych he euery wyght demeth that thylke eſtate þ he deſyreth ouer all thynges, that it be blyſſulneſſe. Now haſt thou thé before thyne eyen almoſt al the purpoſed forme of the welefulneſſe of mankinde that is to ſayne, rycheſſe, honours, power, glorye and delytes, the whych delyte only conſydered he Epicurus, and iuged and eſtabliſſhed that delyte is the ſouerayne good: for as moche as all other thynges, as hym thought byreſte awaye ioye and myrth from the herte. But I returne agayne to the ſtudyes of men of whyche men the corage alwaye reherſeth and ſeketh þ ſouerayne good, all be it ſo that it be wyth a dyrked memorye, but he note by whych pathe, ryghte as a dronken man note nought by whych path he may returne home to hys houſe. Semeth it then that folke forleyen and erren to enforcen hem to haue nede of nothing. Certes there is none other thing that maye ſo moche performen blyſſulneſſe, as an eſtate plenteous of all goodes, that ne hath nede of none other thynge, but that is

ſuffyſaunce of hym ſelfe vnto hym ſelfe. And ſoȝyen ſuche folke them that wenen, þ̄ thylke thyng that is ryght good, that it is eke ryght worthy of honour & of reuerence: certes nay. For that thynge nys neyther foule ne worthy to be deſpyſed, that well nygh all the entencion of mortall folke trauayleth to get it. And power eke ought not to be rekened amóges goodes. What elſe? For it nys not to wene, that thylke thynge that is moſte worthy of all thynges be feble & wythoute ſtrẽgth. And clerenelle of renome, ought that to bene deſpyſed. Certes there may no man forſake, that all thynge that is right excellent and noble, that it ne ſemeth be ryght clere renomed. For certes it nedeth not to ſaye, that bliſſfulnelle be angryſhous ne dyery, ne ſubiet to greuaunces ne ſoȝowes, ſens that in ryght lyteli thynges folke ſeken to haue and to vſen that maye delyten hem. Certes theſe ben the thynges that men wylien and deſyren to gete: & for thys cauſe deſyren they rychelles, dygnytees, regnes, glozye, and delytes. For therby wenen they to haue ſuffyſaunce, honour, power, renome, and gladnelle. Then is it good that men ſeken thus by ſo many dyuers ſtudyes, in whych deſyre it maye not lyghtely be ſhewed, howe great is the ſtrength of nature. For howe ſo men haue diuers ſentences and dyſtozdynges, algates men accozden al in lotynge the ende of good.

Quantas rerum flectit habenas
Natura potens, quibus immenſum
Legibus orbẽ prouida ſeruet, Extringatq; ligans irreſoluto, Singula
nexu, placet arguto, Fidelibus lentis
promere cantu. &c.

THyleth me to ſhewe by ſubtyl ſonge with ſlacke and delytable ſowne of ſtrynges, how that nature myghtely enclyneth & ſtyreth the gouernemẽt of thinges & by ſuche lawes the purueyable keepeth the great world, & how the byndyng reſtrayneth al thynges by a bonde þ̄ may not be vnbounden. All be it ſo þ̄ the lyons of the countrey of Pene beren the fayre chaynes, and take meates of the handes of folke, that yeuen it hem, and dreden her ſturdyre mayſters, of whyche they be wonte to ſuffre beatinges, yf that her horrible mouthes ben bledde, that is to ſaye of beeſtes deuoured: her corage of tyme paſſed that hath bene ydle and reſted repayreth ayen, and they roȝen greuouſly, and remembren on her nature, and ſlaken her nekkes fro her chaynes vnbounde, and her maiſtre fyȝt to tayne wyth blody tethe, aſſayeth the wode wratthes of hem, that is to ſayne, they frete her mayſter. And the iangelynge bryde that ſyngeth on the hye braunches, that is to ſayne in the wodde, and after is encloſed in a ſtraye cage, all though the pleyenge deſyrneſſe of mirthe hem honyed dyuerſes, and large meates wyth ſwete ſtudye: yet natheleſſe yf thylke bryde ſkyppynge out of her ſtrayte cage, feth the agreable ſhadowes of the wodde, ſhe deſdeyneth wyth her fete her meate yſhadde, and ſeketh on morwnyng only the wodde, and ray tereth deſyrynge the wodde wyth her ſwete wyſe. The perde of a tre that is hated aboue by myghty ſtrẽgth boweth redyly the croppe adowne: but yf that the hande that is bente let it gone agayne, anone the croppe loketh vpryght to the heauen. The ſonne Phebus that falleth at euen in the weſtren wawes, returneth ayen eftſones hys carte by a preue pathe there as it is wonte aryſe. All thynges ſeken ayen to her propre courſe, and all thynges reioyſen on her retournynge agayne to her nature: ne none ordinaunce is betake to thynges, but that hath ioyned the ende to the begynnyng, and hath made the courſe ſtedfaſtable, þ̄ it chaunge not fro hys propre kynde.

Vos quoq; a terrena animalia, tenui licet imagine, veſtrum tamẽ principium ſomniatis. Verumq; illum beatitudinis finem, licet minime perſpicaci. &c.

CErtes alſo ye men that bene earthly beeſtes dreamẽ alway your begynnynge, although it be wyth a thyne ymagynacyon, and by a maner thought all be it not clerely ne perfytly ye loken from a ferre to thylke verye fyne of bliſſfulneſſe. And therfore naturell enclynacyon leadeth you to thylke verye good, but many maner errours myſtourneth you therfro. Cõſyder nowe yf that be thylke thynges, by which a mã weneth to get him bliſſfulnes

yf

yf that he maye comen to thylke ende, that he meneth to come to by nature. For yf that money, honours, or these other forsayd thynges byngen to men suche a thynge that no good ne fayle them ne semeth to fayle: Certes thē wol I graunt that they be maked blyssful by thynges that they haue gotten. But yf so be that thylke thynges ne mowen not performe that they byheten, and that there be defaut of many goodes, sheweth it not then clerelye ỳ litle boute of blyssfulnesse is knowen and attryst in thylke thynges. Fyrst and forwarde thou thy selfe, that haddest haboundaunce of rychesse not longe agone, I aske the that in thabundaunce of all thylke rychesse, yf thou were neuer anguyshous or sorye in thy corage of any wronge or greuaūce, that betyde the in any syde. B. Certes (q I) at ne remembreth me not, that euer I was so free of my thought, that I ne was alwaye in anguyshe al somwhat. P. And was that not (q she) for that the lacked somwhat that thou noldeste not haue lacked: or els thou haddest ỳ thou noldest haue had. B. Right so it is (q I) P. Then desyredest thou the presence of ỳ one, & thabsence of that other. B. I graunt weil (q I) P. Forsoth (q she) then neded there somwhat that euery man desyreth. B. Yea there neded (q I) P. Certes (q she) and he ỳ hath lacke or nede of ought, nys not in euery way sufysaunt to hym selfe. B. No (q I) P. And thou (q she) in al the plēte of thy rychesse had dest thylke lacke of sufysaunce. B. What els (q I) P. Then maye not ryches maken that a man nys nedy, ne that he be sufficient to him selfe: and yet that was it that they behetē as it semed. And eke certes I trowe that this be greatly to consyder, that money hathe not in hys owne kynde, that it ne maye bene bynomed of hem that haue it maugre hem. B. I knowe it weil (q I) P. Why shuldest thou not beknowen it (q she) when euery day the stronger folke byuomen it frō the febler maugre hem. Fro whence come els all these forayne complaynites, quarels, or pleadynges, but for that men aske her money that hath ben benomed hem by strength or by gile, and alway maugre hem. B. Right so it is (q I) P. Then hath a mā nede (q she) to seken him forayn helpe, by whych he maye defende his money. B. Who maye saye nay (q I) P. Certes (q she) and hym neded none help, yf he ne had no money that he myght lese. B. That is doutele (q I) P. Then is thys thynge turned in ys the contrary (q she) for ryches, that men wenen shulde maken sufysaunce, they maken a man rather haue nede of forayne helpe. Whych is the maner or ỳ gyse (q she) that rychesse may dryuen away nede. Ryche folke may they neither haue hōger ne thurst. These ryche men maye they fele no colde on theyr lymmes in wynter: but ỳ wilt answere that riche men haue ynough, wher with they may staūchen her honger, & slaken her thurst and done awaye colde. In thys wyse maye nede ben cōforted by rychesse, but certes nede ne maye not al vtterly be done awaye. For yf thys nede that alwaye is gapynge and gredy be fulfylled wyth the rychesse and any other thyng, yet dwelleth then a nede that mote be fulfylled. I holde me styll, and tell not howe that lytell thynge sufysyeth to nature: but certes to auarice sufficeth not ynough of nothing For synne that rychesse ne maye not all done awaye nede, and they make theyr owne nede what maye it then be, that ye wenen that rychesses mowen yeuen you sufysaunce.

Quamuis fluente diues auri gurgite
Non expleturas cogat auarus opes. &c.

AL were it so, that a noble coueitous man had a ryuer or a gutter fletynge al of gold, yet shuld it neuer staunche hys coueityse: and all though he had his neche charged wyth precious stones of the reed see and though he do eere hys feldes plentrous wyth an hundred oren, neuer ne shal hys bytynge besynes forleten hym whyle he lyueth, ne the lyght rychesses ne shal not beaten him company when he is deed.

Sed dignitas honorabilem, reuerendūq; cui prouenerint, reddunt Nil vis ea est magistratibus, vt vitium mentibus virtutes inserant, vicia depellant. &c.

But

But dygnitees to whome they be comen, maken they hym honourable and reuerende / haue they not so great strengthe that they maye putten vertue in hertes of folkes, that vsen the lordshyp of hem, or elles may they done away the vyces. Certes they be not wonte to done away wyckednesse, but they be wonte rather to shewe wyckednesse. And therof cometh it þ I haue ryght greate dysdayne, that dygnitees ben yeuen to wycked men. For whych thynge Catullus cleped a counsell of Rome (that hyght Nonius) postome of boche, as who sayeth, he cleped hym a congregacion of vyces in hys brest, as a postome is full of corrupcion: al were Nonius set in a chayre of dygnitee. Seest thou not then, howe great vylonies dignitees done to wycked men: certes vnworthynesse of wycked men shulde be the lasse sene, yf they were renomed of none honoure. Certes thou thy selfe ne myghtest not be brought wyth as many perils as thou myghtest suffre, that thou woldest beare the magystrate wyth decorate that is to sayne, that for peryl that myght be fall the by offence of the kynge Theodryke, thou noldest not be felowe in gouernaunce with Decorate, when thou sawe that he had wicked corage of a licorous shrew and of an accusour. Ne I maye not for suche honours iugen hem worthy of reuerence, that I deme and holde vnworthy to haue thylke same honours. Nowe yf thou sawe a man that were fulfylde of wysedome, certes thou ne myghtest not deme that he were vnworthy to the honoure, or els to the wysdome of whych he is fulfylled. B. No (q I) P. Certes (q she) dygnytees apertenyen properly to vertue, & vertue transporteth dygnite anone to thylke man, to which she her selfe is conioyned. And for as moche as honours of people ne maye not make folke dygne of honoure, it is well sene clerly, that they ne haue no propre beautye of dygnitee. And yet men oughten take more hede in thys: for yf a wyght be in so moche the more outcaste, that he is dyspyssed of moste folke, so as dygnytee ne may not maken shrewes worthy of no reuerence, then maketh dygnite shrewes rather dispised the prayssed, the whyche shrewes dygnite sheweth to moche folke. And forsoth not vnpunyshed, þ is to sayne, that shrewes reuengen hem ayen warde vpon dignitees. For they yelden ayen to dygnytees as great guerdons, when they dyspotten & defoulen dygnitees worth her by lonye. And for almoch as thou ne wost knowest that thylke very reuerence ne may not comen by these shadowy transytorye dygnitees, vnderstande now thus: that yf a man had bled and had many maner dygnitees of consuls, and were peraventure comen amonge straunge nacions, shulde thylke honoure maken hym worshypfull and redouted of straunge folke. Certes yf that honour of people were a naturell yefte to dygnitees, it ne myghte neuer cessen no where amonge no maner folke to done hys offyce. Ryght as a fyre in euery contrey ne stynteth not to enchaufen and maken hote. But for as moche as for to bene honourable or reuerēt ne cometh not to folke of her propre strength of nature, but only of þ false opinion of folke, that is to sayne, that wenen that dygnitees make folke dygne of honours anone therfore when they comen there as folke ne knowen not thylke dygnytes, her honours vanysshen away and that anone. But that is amonge straunge folke mayest thou sayne. Ne amonges hem there they were borne, ne dured not thylke dygnitees alwey. Certes the dygnite of the prouostry of Rome was whylom a great power: nowe is it nothynge but an ydle name, and the rent of the senatorie a great charge. And yf a wyght whylom had thoffyce to taken hede to the tayles of the people, as of corne and of other thinges, he was holden amonges hem great. But what thinge is more nowe outcast then thylke prouostry. As I haue sayd a lytle her before, that thylke thynge that hath no propre beaute of it selfe, receyueth somtyme pryde and shrynynge, and somtyme leseth it by the opinion of vsaunces. Nowe yf that dygnytees then ne mowe not make folke dygne of reuerence, and yf that dygnitees were foule of her owen wyll, by the fylthe of shrewes, and yf dygnytees lesen her shrynynge by chaūgynge of tymes, and yf they weren foule by estimacyon of people, what is it þ they han in hem self of beaute, that ought to be desyred. as who sayeth, none: then ne mowen they yeuen no beaute of dygnite to none other.

Quamuis se tyrio superbus ostro
Comeret et niueis lapillis. &c.

A Be it ſo, that the proude Nero wyth all his wode luxure, kembe hym & appareiled hym wyth fayre purpure of Tyre, and wyth whyte peeries. Algates yet therof he hatefull to all folke, thys is to ſaye that all was he behated of all folkes, yet thys wycked Nero had great lordſhyppe. And yaf whylom to the reuerent Senatours the vnworſhypfull ſeates of dygnitees. Vnworſhypfull ſeates he clepeth here, for that Nero that was ſo wycked gaue the dygnitees.

Who wolde then reaſonably wenen, that blyſſulneſſe were in ſuche honours, as bene yeuen by vycious ſhrewes.

In vero regna, regumq; familiaritas efficere potentem valent. Quid &c.

BVt reygnes & familiaritees of kynges, maye they maken a man to bene myghtye. Howe elſe when hys blyſſulneſſe dureth perpetually. But certes the olde age ofrynes paſſed, and eke of preſent tyme nowe is full of enſamples, howe þ kynges bene chaunged into wretchednelle, out of her deſtulneſſe. O, a noble thyng & a clere thyng is power, that nys not founden myghtye to kepe it ſelfe. And yf that power of realmes be author and maker of blyſſulneſſe, yf thylke power lacketh on any ſyde, amenuſeth it not thylke blyſſulnes, and bryngeth in wretched neſſe. But yet al be it ſo, that the realmes of mankynde ſtretchen wyde, yet mote there nede ben moche folke, ouer whych that euerye kynge ne hath no lordſhyp ne cõmaundement. And certes vpon thylke ſyde that power falleth, whych that maketh folke blyſſul Loyghe on that ſame ſyde no power entreth vnderneth that maketh hem wretches. In thys maner then moten kynges haue more portion of wretchednes then of welefulneſſe

I truaunt that was kynge of Cecyle, that had aſſayed þ peryll of hys eſtate, ſhewed by ſymilitude the dredes of realmes by gaſtneſſe of a ſwearde, that honge ouer the heed of his ſamplyer. What thynge is then thys power that maye not done awaye the bytynges of beſyneſſe, ne eſchewe the pryckes of drede.

And certes yet wolden they lyuen in ſykernelle, but they maye not. And yet they glozyſyen hem in her power. Holdeſt thou then that thylke man be myghtye, that thou ſeeſt that he wolde done that he may not done. And holdeſt thou then hym a myghtye man, that hath enuyronned hys ſydes wyth mẽ of armes or ſergeaũtes, and dreddeth more hem that he maketh agaſt, then they dreden hym, and that is put in the handes of hys ſeruaunt tes, for he ſhulde ſeme myghtye. But of famulyers or ſeruauntes of kynges, why ſhulde I tell the any thynge, ſyth that I my ſelfe haue ſhewed the, that realmes hem ſelfe bene full of great febleſſe. The whych famulyers certes the royal power of kynges in hole eſtate and in eſtate abated, full ofte throweth adowne.

Nero conſtrayned Seneche hys famulyer and hys mayſter, to cheſen on what death he wolde dye. Antonius commaunded þ knyghtes ſlowen wyth her ſwordes Papinian his famulyer, whych Papinyan had ben lõgtyme full myghty amonges hem of the courte, and yet certes they wolden both haue renounced her power. Of whych two Seneck enforced hym to yeuen to Nero hys rycheſſe, and alſo to haue gone into ſolytarye eryle. But when the great weyght, that is to ſayne, of lordes power or of Fortune, drawyth hem that ſtul len fall, neyther of hem ne myght do that he wolde. what thynge is then thylke power, that though men haue it, yet they ben agaſte and when thou woldeſt haue it, thou art not ſyker. And yf thou woldeſt forleten it, thou mayeſt not eſchewen it. But whether ſuche men ben frendes at nede, as bene counſayled by fortune, and not by vertue. Certes ſuche folke as welefull fortune maketh frendes, contrarious fortune maketh hym enemyes. And what peſtilence is more myghtye for to anoy a wyght, then a famulyer enemye.

Qui ſe volet eſſe potentem, Animos domet ille feroces: Nec victa libidine colla. &c.

WHo ſo woll be myghtye, he mote daũten hys cruel corages, ne put not hys necke ouercomen, vnder the foule rayne of lechery

thyrre. For all be it so, that ꝑ londshyp stretch so ferre, that the countreye of Inde quaketh at thy cõmaundemẽtes, or at thy lawes. And that the last yle in the see, that hight Tyle, be tyrale to the: yet yf thou mayst not putten away thy foule derke delyres, and dryue oute fro the, wretched cõplayntes: Certes it nys no power that thou haste.

Gloria vero ꝙ fallax sepe, ꝙ turpis est. Unde non iniuria tragicus exclamat. O gloria gloria millibus mortalium nihil aliud facta, nisi aurium inflatio magna. ꝛc.

But glorye, howe dysceyuable & howe foule is it oft? For whych thynge, not skylfully a tragedye that is to sayne, a maker of dytees ꝑ hyghten tragedies, cryed & sayd: O glorye glorye (ꝙ he) thou narte no thyng els to thousands of folkes, but a swellyr of eares. For many haue ful great renome by the false opinion of the people.

And what thynge may be thought fouler then suche praysynge? For thylke folke that ben praysed falsely, they mooten nedes haue shame of her praysynges. And yf that folke haue getten hem thanke or praysynge by her desertes: What thynge hath thylke pryse echyd or encreased to the conscyence of wyse folke, that measuren her good, not by the rumoure of the people, but by the sothfastnesse of cõscience? And yf it seme a fayre thynge, a man to haue encreased and spradd hys name, then foloweth it, that it is demed to bene a foule thynge, yf it ne be yspradd and encreased But as I sayd a lytell here before, that sythe there mote nedes ben many folkes, to whych folke the renome of a man ne may not comen it befalleth, that he that thou wenest be glorious and renomed, semeth in the nerr parte of therthes, to ben wythout glory and wythout renome. And certes amonges these thynges I ne knowe not that the pryse and the grace of the people, nys neyther worthy to bene remembred, ne cometh of wyse iugement, ne is ferme perdurably. But nowe of thys name of gentylesse: What man is it that ne maye well sene howe vayne and howe flyttynge it is? For yf the name of gyntylesse be referred to renome and clerenesse of lynage, then is gentell name but a foraync thynge, that is to say, to hem that glorifyen hem of her lynage. For it semeth that gentyles be a maner praysynge, that cometh of the desertes of auncestres. And yf praysyng maketh gentylles, thē moten they nedes ben gentyll, that ben prayssed. For wherych thynge it foloweth, that yf thou ne haue no gentylnesse of thy selfe, that is to sayne pryse, that cometh of thy desertes, forayne gentylesse ne maketh the not gentyll. But certes yf there be any good in gentylesse, I trowe it be all onely thys: that it semeth as that a maner necessite be imposed to gentylmen, for that they ne shulde not outragen or forleauen fro the vertues of her noble kynred.

Omne dominũ genus in terris Simili surgit ab ortu. Unus enim rerum pater est. Unus cuncta ministrat. ꝛc.

All the lynage of men, that ben in erthe ben of semblable byrth. One alone is father of thinges: one alone ministreth all thynges: He yaf to ꝑ sun hys beames: He yaf to the moone her hornes: he yaf to men the earth: he yaf the sterres to the heuen: he enclosed wyth membres the soules that comen fro me hys hye seate. Then comen all mortall folke of noble seed. Why noysen ye or bosten of your elders? For yf ye loke your begynnyng and god your father authour & your maker, then nys there no forelyued wyght or vngentyll, but yf he nourysshe hys corage vnto vyces, and forlete hys proper byrth.

Quid autem de corporis voluptatibus loquar, quarum appetentia quidem plena est anxietatis. ꝛc.

But what shall I sayne of delyces of body, of whych delyces the delyrynges ben ful of anguyshes, and the fulfyllynges of hem ben ful of penaūce? How gret sicknesses & how gret sorowes vnsuffrable, ryght as a maner fruyte of

of wyckednesse ben thylke delyces wonte to bryngen to the bodyes of folkes that vsen hem: of which delyces I not what ioy may ben had of her moving. But this wot I wel that whosoeuer wolle remēbren hym of his thinges, he shall well vnderstand, that the illes of delyces ben sorowfull and sory.

And yf thylke delyces nowe maken folke blysful, thā by ꝑ same cause moten these bestes ben cleped blysful, of which beestes all the entention hasteth to fulfyl her bodily ioyse. And the gladnesse of wyfe and chyldrē were an honest thynge, but it hath ben sayd that it is ouer mokel ayenst kynde, that chyldren hane ben founden tourmenters to her fathers, I not how many. Of whiche chyldren how bytyng is euery condicion, it neadeth not to tellē it the, that hast or this time assayed it, and art yet now anguishous. In this tyme approue I the sentence of my disciple Euripidis that sayd, that he that hath no chyldren, is welefull by infortune.

Habet hoc voluptas omnis stimulis agit fruentes: Aptumq; par volātium vbi grata mella fuit: Fugit et nimis tenaci ferit icta corda morsu ꝛc

Euery delyte hath this, that it anguysheth hem with prykes ꝑ vsen it. It resembleth to these flyinge flyes that we clepen bees, that after that he hath shed hys agreable honyes, he flyeth awaye, and stynge th the hertes of hem that bene smytten with bytyng ouerlonge holden.

Nihil igitur dubium est, quin he ad beatitudinem vie deuia quedam sint: nec perducere eo quemq; valeant. ꝛc.

Now is it no dout than, that these wayes ne be a maner misleadynges to blysfulnesse: ne that they ne mowen not leaden folke thider as they beheten to leeden hem. But with howe greate harmes these forsayde wayes ben enlaced, I shall shewe you shortly.

For why, yf thou enforcest the to assemble moneye, thou must bytreuen hym his money that hath it. And yf thou wolte shynen with dignities, thou must beseechen and supplyen hem, that yeuen tho dygnities. And yf thou coueytest by honour to goone before other folkes, thou shalte defoule thy selfe thorowe humblesse of askynge. Yf thou desyrest power, thou shalt by awaytes of thy subiectes anoyously be cast vnder by many parils. Alkest thou glorye: thou shalte ben so distracte by aspre thynges that thou shalt forgone sikernesse. And yf thou woldest leden thy lyfe in delytes, euery wight shall despisen the, & forlēe the as thou ꝑ art thrall to thyng, ꝑ is ryght foule & bryttel, ꝑ is to sayne, seruaunt to thy bodye. Nowe is it than well ysene, how lytle and howe bryttel possessyon they coueyten, that putten the goodes of the bodye aboue her owne reason. For mayst thou surmounten these olyfauntes in greatnesse or in weyght of body: or mayst thou be strēger than the bull: Mayest thou be swyfter than the tygre: Beholde the spaces and the stablenesse and ꝑ swyfte course of heauen, & stynt somtime to wondren on foule thinges The which heauen certes ne is not rather for these thynges to be wondred vpon, than for the reason by which it is governed. But the shynyng of thy fourme, that is to sayne, the beautye of thy bodye, howe swyftly passing is it, and howe transitorie certes it is more flyttynge than the mutabylitie of floures of the sommer season. For so as Aristotel telleth, that yf that men hadde eyen of a beaste that byght lynx, so that the lokynge of folke myght peercen thorowe tho thynges that withstonden it. who so loked than in the trayles of the body of Alcibiades, that was full fayre in the superfycie without, it shuld seme ryght foule.

And for thy, yf thou semest fayre, thy nature ne maketh not that, but the disceuaūce of feblenesse of the eyen that looken. But prayse the goodes of the body as moche as euer ꝑ lyst, so ꝑ thou knowe algates ꝑ what so it be, that is to sayne, of the goodes of the bodye, whyche that thou wondrest vpon maye bene destroyed or ris dissolued by the heate of a feuer of thre dayes. Of which for sayd thinges I may reducen this shortly in a summe, that these worldly goodes, which ꝑ ne mowen yeuen ꝑ they behighten, ne ben

not parfyte by the congregation of all goodes, that they ne be not wayes ne pathes þ bryngen men to blyssfulnesse, ne maken men to be blyssfull.

Heu heu q̄ miseros tramite deuios abducit ignorantia: Non aurum in viridi quæritis arbore. &c.

ALas, which folye, and whiche ignorauince mysleadeth wandryng wrecches from the path of very good. Certes, ye seken no gold in grene trees, ne ye gadren not precyous stones in hynes, ne ye ne hyden not your gynnes in hye mountaynes to catchen fysh: of the which ye maye maken ryche feestes.

And yf ye lyke to hunt to Roes, ye ne go not to the foordes of the water that hyght Thyrene. And ouer this, men know wel the crekes and the cauernes of the see yhid in þ floudes, & knowen eke which water is most plentyous of white perles, & knowen which water aboundeth most of red purpure that is to sayne, of a maner shelfysh, with which men dyen purpure: and knowen which strōdes abounden moost of tendre fysshes, or of sharpe fysshes, that hyght Echynes. But folke suffren hem selfe to ben so blynde, that hem ne recchen not to knowe where thylke goodes ben yhid, whiche that they coueten, but plungen hem in earth, and seken there thylke good that surmounteth the heauen, that beareth the sterres. what prayer maye I maken that be digne to the nyce thoughtes of men. But I praye that they coueyten rychesse and honoures, so that whan they haue gotten tho false goodes, wyth greate trauayle, that therby they mowen knowen the very goodes.

Hactenus mendacis formam felicitatis ostendisse sufficerit, q̄ si perspicaciter intuearis, ordo est deinceps, re

THat sufficeth that I haue sayde hytherto, the fourme of false welefulnesse, so þ yf thou loke now clerely: the ordre of myne entention requyreth from hēce forth to shewen the very welfulnesse. B. Forsothe (q̄ I) I se well now, that sufficyaunce maye not cōmen by riches, ne power by realmes, ne reuerence by dignities, ne gentilesse by glory, ne ioye by delyces. Phi. And hast thou well knowen the causes (q̄ she) why it is. Boece. Certes me semeth q̄ I (se hem, ryght as though it were through a lytle clyfte: But me were leuer knowen hem more openly of the. P. Certes (q̄ she) the reason is alreadye. For thylke thyng that symply is one thynge without anye deuysyon, the errour and folly of mankynde deuydeth and departeth it, & mysleadeth it, and transporteth from very and parfyte good to goodes that be false and vnparfyte. But say me this: wenest thou, that he that hath nede of power, that hym ne lacketh nothynge. B. Nay (q̄ I) P. Certes (q̄ she) þ sayst aryght for yf so be that there is a thing that in any parte be feble of power, certes as in that it mote nedes be nedy of foraynе helpe. Boece. Ryght so it is (q̄ I) Phi. Sufficiaunce and power ben of one kynde. B. So semeth, q̄ I Philose. And demest thou quod she that a thynge that is of this maner, that is to say sufficyaunt and myghtye, ought been dispysed, or els that it be ryght digne of reuerence aboue all thynges. B. Certes (q̄ I it is no dout that it is ryght worthye to be reuerenced. P. Let vs adden (q̄ she) reuerence to sufficiaunce and to power, so that we demen þ these thre thynges be all one thynge. B. Certes quod I, let vs adden it yf we wyl graūt the soth. P. what demest thou (q̄ she) than is that a darke thyng and not noble, that is sufficyaūt, reuerent, and myghtye, or els that it is ryght noble and ryght clere by reclēt of renoume. Cōsydre thā, q̄ she, as we haue graunted here beforne, that he that ne hath no nede of nothyng, and is moost myghtye and most digne of honour, yf hym nedeth any clerenesse of renoume, which clerenesse he myght not graunten of hym selfe: so forlack of thylke clearenesse he myght semen the feblest on any syde, or the more outcaste.

Glose. That is to saye, naye: For who so that is sufficyaunt myghtye, and reuerente, clearenesse of renoume folowerth of the forsayde thynges: he hath it all readye of hys sufficyaunce.

B. I may not quod I, denye it, but I mot graunten

graunten as it is, that this thynge is ryght celebrable by cleerenesse of renoume and noblesse. Phil. Than folowerth (quod she) that we adden cleerenesse of renoume to the forsayde thynges, so that there be amonges hem no differences. Boece. This is a consequence (q I) Philoso. This thinge than (q she) that ne hath nede of no forayne thynge, and that maye doo all thynge by hys strengthes, and that is noble and honourable, is it not a mery thyng and ioyfull. Boece. But whence (quod I) that anye sorowe myghte come to this thynge that is suche: certes, I maye not thynke. Philosop. Than mote we graunten (q she) that this thynge be full of gladnesse, yf the forsayde thynges be sothe. And certes also mote we graunten, that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reuerence and gladnesse be oneiye dyuers by names, but her substaunce hath no diuersitie.

Boece. It mote nedeiye be so (quod I) Philosophia. Thylke thynge than (quod she) that is one, and symple in hys nature, the wyckednesse of men departeth and deuydeth it. And whan they enforcen hem to gette parte of a thynge, that ne hath no part they ne getten hem neyther thylke partye, that nys none, ne the thynge all the whole that they desyre. Boece. In whiche manere quod I. Philosophia. Thilke man, quod she, that seeketh rychesse to hyen poueste: he ne trauayleth hym not for to get power, for he wolde leauer be darke and vyle, and eke with drawerth from hym selfe manye naturell desyres, for he wolde leese the moneye that he hath assembled. But certes, in this maner he ne getteth hym no suffysaunce, ý power for whiche he trauayleth, and that molestie pryckeih, and that lyche maketh outcaste, and that darkenesse hydeth. And certes, he that desyreth oneiye power, wasteth and scattereth rychesse, and dispyseth degrees and eke honour that is vnto power ne he ne prayseth glory nothyng. Certes, thus seest thou wel, that many thinges faylen to hym: For he hath sometyme defaute of many necessities, and many anguisshes breken hym. And whan he may not don the defautes away, he sorweth to be mighty, and that is the thyng that he most desyreth. And ryght thus maye I make semblable reasons of honour, of glory, and of degrees. For so euerye of these forsayde thynges is the same that these other thynges bene, that is to sayne all one thynge. whosoeuer seketh to getten that one of these, and not ý other, he ne getteth not that he desyreth. B. what sayest thou, than yf that a man couete to getten all these thynges togyther. Ph. Certes (q she) I woide saye that he wolde get hym soueraine blysfulnesse, but that shal he fynde in tho thynges that I haue shewed, that nowe not yeuen that they beheten. B. Certes, no (q I) Philo. Than (quod she) ne shullen men not by no way seken blysfulnes in suche thynges as men wenen, that they ne nowe gyuen but one thynge synguleriy of all that men seken. Boece. I graunt well (q I) ne none sother thyng may be sayd. Ph. Now hast thou than (q she) the tourne and the cause of false welefulnesse: Nowe turne and flyt agayn to thy thought, for ther shalt thou sene anon thylke very blysfulnesse, that I haue behyght the. B. Certes (quod I) it is clere and open, though it were to a blinde man: And that shewedst thou me a litle here beforne, whan thou enseededst the to shewe me the causes of the false welefulnesse. For (but yf I be begyled) than is thylk very blisfulnesse and parfyte, that perfytely maketh a man suffysaunt, myghty, honourable, noble and full of gladnesse. And for thou shalt well knowe, that I haue wel vnderstanden these thynges within my hert: I know wel that thylke blysfulnesse that men receiue yeuen one of the forsayde thynges, syns they bene all one: I knowe doutlesse, that thylke thynge is ful of blysfulnesse. Ph. O my norice (quod she) by this opynyon I say, that thou arte blysfull, yf thou put this therto that I shall sayne. B. what is that (quod I). Ph. Thy. Trowest thou that there be anye thynge in this erthly mortall tombly thynges, that maye bryngen this estate. Bo. Certes (quod I) I trowe it not: and thou hast shewed me well that ouer thylke good ther nis nothing more to ben desyred. Ph. These thynges thā (quod she) that is to sayne, erthly suffysaunce and power, and suche thynges erthlye, they semen likenesse of very good, or els it semeth that they yeuen to mortall folke a maner of goodnesse, that ne be not parfyte: but thylke good that is very and parfyt, that may they not yeuen. B. I accorde me well (q I). Phi. Than (q she) for as moch as thou hast kno-

wen, which is thilke verye blysfulnesse, and
ene which thylke thynges ben, that lyen fal
frye blysfulnesse, that is to saye, that by dis-
ceyte semen very goodes: Nowe behoueth
the to knowe whence and where thou mowe
sene thylke very blysfulnesse. B. Certes, q I
that desyre I greatly, and haue abyde lõge
tyme to herken it. P. But for as moch (quod
she) as it lyketh to my disciple Plato in hys
boke of Thimeo, that in ryght lytle thinges
men shulden beseche the help of God: what
iudgest thou that be nowe to doone, so that
we may deserue to fynde the seate of thylke
souerayne god. B. Certes (q I) I deme
that we shulden clepe to the father of al god
ges, for withouten hym nys there nothyng
founded aryght. P. Thou sayest aryght (q
she) and began anon to syngen ryght thus.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas. Terrarum celig sator qui tempus ab euo, ire iubes, stabilisq manens das cuncta moueri. Quem non externe pepulerunt fingere cause. ꝛc.

O Thou father souerayne and creatour of heuen and of erthes that gouernest this worlde by perdurable reason, that commaundest the tymes to gone, syth that age had begynnynge. Thou that dwellest thy selfe aye stedfast and stable, and yeuest all other thynges to be meued, ne foreyne causes ne constreynen ꝑ meuen to compoun werke of flottring mater but only the forme of souerayne good ylet within the withoute enuye, that meued the frely. Thou that art alderfayrest, bearynge the fayre worlde in thy thought: formedest this world to thy lyknesse semblable of the fayre worlde in thy thought. Thou dyrectest all thynge on thy souerayn ensample, and commaundest that this worlde perfectlyche ymaked, haue freely and absolute hys perfyte partyes. Thou byndest the elementes by nõbres proporcionables, that the colde thynges mowen ascrowden wyth the hoote thynges, and the drye thynges with the moyste: That the fyre that is purest, ne fle not ouerhye, ne that the heuynesse ne drawe nottre adowne ouerlowe the erthes that be plonged in the waters. Thou knyttest togyther the meane soule of trebly kynde mouyng al thinges, and deuidest it by membres accordyng And whan it is thus deuyded, it hath affirmed blendde amouynge into roundes, it goeth to turne agayne to hym selfe, and enuyroneth a full depe thought, and turneth the heuen by semblable ymage. Thou, by euen lyke causes enhaunsest the soules and the lesse lyues, and habiynge hem to heyght by lyght waynes or cartes. Thou sowest hem into heuen and into erth, and whan they be conuerted to the by thy benigne lawe, thou makest hem retourne ayento the by ayen lesyng fyre. O father, yeue thou to the thought to flyen vp into thy strayte sete, and graunt hem to enuyronne the well of good. And ꝑ lyght yfounde graunt hym to fyxen the clere syghtes of his corage in the: and scatre thou and to breake the weyghtes and the cloudes of erthly heuynesse, and shyne thou by thy bughtnesse, for thou clerenesse art thou arte pesyble rest to deuonayre folke, thou thy selfe art be gynnynge, bearer, leader, path and terme to loke on the that is our ende.

Quoniam igitur, q sit imperfecti que etiam perfecti boni forma vidisti nunc demonstrandum reor. ꝛc.



Or as moche than, as thou hast sene which is the fourme of good, that nys not parfyt and the forme of good which that is parfyte, no we trowe I that it were good to shewe in what this perfection of blysfulnesse is set And in this thynge I trowe that we shall fyrst enquyre for to weten, yf that any suche maner good as thylke good as thou hast dyscryued a lytle here beforne, that is to saye souerayne good, may be founden in the nature of thinges. For that bayne ymagynacion of thought ne distreine vs not, and put vs out al the sothfastnesse of thilke thynge that is submytted to vs. But it maye not be denyed that thylke ne is, and that is ryght as a well of all goodes. For al thyng that is clepyd imparfyte, is proued imparfyte, by the amenusynge of perfection of thynge that is parfyte. And herof cõmeth it, that in euery thyng generall, yf that men sene any thyng that is imparfyte: certes thilke thyng gene-

ral

nall, there mote be some thynge that is perfyte. For yf so be that perfection is done away, menne maye not thynke ne saye from whence thylke thynge is, that is cleped imperfyte. For the nature ne toke nother begynnyng of thynges amenused and imperfyte, but it procedeth of thynges that ben al hole absolute, and distendeth so downe unto the nerest thynges, as in to thynges empty and without frute. But as I haue shewed a lytell here before me, that yf there be a blysfulnesse that be freyle and vayne, & imparfyte, there maye no man dout, that there nis som blysfulnesse, that there is sadde, stedfast and parfyte. B. This is concluded (quod I) fermely and sothfastly. P. But consydre also (quod she) in whome this blisfulnesse inhabyteth. The comune accorde and concepte of the courage of men proueth and graunteth, that god prince of all thynges is good. For so as nothynge may be thought better than good, it may not be douted than, that he that nothing nis better thā he nis good. Certes, reason sheweth that god is so good, that it proueth by very force, that parfyte good is in hym. For yf God nis suche, he ne maye not ben prince of all thyng. For certes, somthyng possessynge in it selfe parfyte good, shulde be more worthy than God: and it shulde semen that thilke thynge were fyrst and older than God. For we haue shewed apertly, that all thynges that bene parfyte, ben fyrst, or thinges that bene imparfyte. And for thy, for as moch as that my reason or my processe ne goo not awaye without an ende, we owē to graunten that the souerayne good is ryghtfull of souerayn parfyte good. And we haue establyshed, that the souerayne good is very blysfulnesse, thā mote it nedes be, that verye blysfulnesse is set in souerayne good. B. This take I well (quod I) ne this ne maye not be withsayde in no manere. P. But I praye the (quod she) se now how thou mayest prouen holily, and without corruption, this that we haue said that the souerayne God is full of ryght souerayne good. B. In which maner (quod I) P. Wenest thou ought (quod she) that the father of al thinges hath taken thilke souerayn good any where out of hym selfe? Of which souerayne good, men proueth that he is full. Ryght as thou mightest thinke, that god hath blysfulnesse in hym selfe, and thilk blisfulnesse that is in hym were dyuers in substaunce. For yf thou wene, that God hath receyued thylke good out of hym self, thou mayst wene, that he that yaue thilke good to God be more worthye than God. But I am beknowe and confesse, and that ryght dignly, that God is right worthy aboue al thinges And yf so be, that this good be in him by nature but that is dyuers from hym by wenynge reason, syns we speken of God prince of all thynges. Fayne who so fayne maye, who was he that conioyned these thynges togyther. And eke at the last se well, that a thing that is dyuers fro anye thynge, that thylke thynge nys not that same thyng, for which it is vnderstonden to ben dyuers. Than folowerth it wel, that thylke thynge that by his nature is dyuers from souerayne good, that thynge is not souerayne good. But certes, it were a felonous cursednesse to thynken, that of hym that nothynge nis more worth. For alwaye of all thynges the name of hem ne maye not ben better than her begynner. For which I maye concluden by ryght very reason, that thylke that is begynnyng of al thinges, thilke same thyng is souerayne God in his substaunce. B. Thou hast sayd ryghtfully (quod I) Philoso. But we haue grauted (quod she) that the souerayne good is blysfulnesse. Boece. That is soth quod I) Philosophye. Than (quod she) we moten nedes graunten and confessen, that thilke same souerayne good be God. Boece. Certes (quod I) I ne maye not denye ne withstande the reasons purposed: and I se well that it followeth by strength of the premisses. Philo. Loke nowe (quod she) yf this be proued yet more fermely thus, that there ne mowē not ben to souerayne goodes that bene dyuers amonge hem selfe. For certes, the goodes that ben dyuers amonge hem selfe, that one is not that the other is. Than ne mowen neither of hem be parfyte, so as eyther of hem lacketh to other, but that that nys not parfyte, men maye sene apertly that it nys not souerayne. The thynges than that ben souerayny good, ne mowen by no waye be dyuers. But I haue well concluded, that blysfulnesse and God bene the souerayne good, for whyche it mote neades bene that souerayne blysfulnesse is souerayne dignitie.

Boece. Nothynge (quod I) is more sothe-

sull than this, ne maye ferme by reason, ne a maye worthye thynge than god may not be concluded. Philosophy. Upon these thinges than (quod she) ryght as these geometriciens whan they haue shewed theyr propositions ben wonte to bringen in thynges that they clepen porismes or declarations of forsaid thynges, ryght so well I yeue the here as a corallarye, or a mede of crowne. For why, for as moche as by the gettynge of blysfulnesse, men bene maked blysfull: and blysfulnesse is dignitie. Than is it manifest and open, that by the gettynge of dignitie men be maked blysfull, ryght as by the gettynge of iustyce. And by the gettyng of sapyence they be maked wyse, ryghte so nedes by the semblable reason, whan they haue gotten dyuinitie, they be made goddes. Than is euerye blysfull man a god. But certes, by nature there nys but one god, but by the participacion of the duynitie, there ne letteth, ne destourbeth nothynge, that there ne be manye goddes. Boece. This is (quod I) a fayre thynge and a precious, clepe it as thou wilt be it Corollarye, or Porisme, or Mede of crowne, or declarynge. Philosophy. Certes (quod she) nothynge nys fayrer than is the thynge that by reason shoulde be added to these forsayde thynges. Boece. what thynge (quod I) Philosoph. So (quod she) as it semeth, that blysfulnesse contayneth manye thynges, it were for to weten whether that all these thynges maken or conioynen as a maner bodye of blysfulnesse, by the diuersite of partyes, of membres, or els yf anye of all these thynges be suche that it accomplysshe by hym selfe the substaunce of blysfulnesse. So all these other thinges ben referred and brought to blysfulnesse, that is to say, as to the chefe of hem. Boece. I wolde (quod I) that thou madest me clerely to understande what thou sayest, and what thou recordeste me the forsayde thynge. Philosophye. Haue I not iudged (quod she) that blysfulnesse is good. Boece. Yes forsoth (quod I) and that soueraigne good. Philos. Adde than (quod she) thylke good that is made blysfulnesse to all the forsayde thynges. For thylke same blysfulnesse, that is demed to be soueraygne suffysaunce, thylke selfe is soueraygne power soueraygne reuerence, soueraygne clerenesse or noblesse, and soueraygne delyte. what sayest thou than of all these thynges, that is to say suffysaunce, power, and these other thynges. Ben they than as membres of blysfulnesse, or ben they referred and brought to soueraygne good, ryght as all thynges that ben brought to the chefe of hem. Boece. I vnderstonde well (quod I) what thou purposeste to seke: but I desyre for to herken, that thou shewe it to me. Philos. Take nowe thus the discretion of this question (quod she.) yf all these thynges (quod she) weren membres to felicitie, than weren they diuers that one from that other: and suche is the nature of partyes or of membres, that diuers membres compowneu a bodye. Boece. Certes (quod I) it hath well be shewed here beforne, that all these thynges ben all one thinge. Philo. Than ben they no membres (quod she.) For els it shulde seme, that blisfulnesse were conioyned all of o membre aloone, but that is a thynge that maye not be done. Boece. This thyng (quod I) than nis not doutous but I abyde to herken the remnaunt of thy question. Philo. This is open and clere (quod she) that all other thynges ben referred and brought to good. For therfore is suffysaunce requyred, for it is demed to be good, and for thy is power requyred, for men trowen also that it be good. And this same thynge mowen we thynken and conceyten of reuerence, of noblesse and of delyte. Than is soueryne good, the summe and the cause of all that ought to ben desyred. For why, thylke thyng that withholdeth no good in it self, ne semblaunce of good, it ne maye not well in no maner be desyred ne requyred. And contrarye: For though that thynges by her nature ne ben not good, algates yf men weneu that they ben good, yet ben they desyred as though they were be reiye good. And therfore it is sayde, that men ought to wene by ryght, that bountie bene the soueryne fyne and the cause of all the thynges that bene to requyren. But certes, thilke that is cause for which mé requiren any thyng, it semeth that thilke same thyng be most desyred, as thus: yf that a wyghte woldе ryden for cause of heale, he ne desyreth not so moch ỳ mouing to ryden as the effecte of his heale. Nowe than syns that al thynges ben requyred for the grace of good, they ben not desyred of al folke more than the same good.

but we haue graunted that blysfulnesse is that same thynge, for whyche that all these other thynges bene desyred. Than is it thus that certes only blysfulnesse is required and desyred. By whych thynge it sheweth clerely, that of good and blysfulnesse is all one & the same substaunce. Boece. I se not (quod I) wherfore that men myghte dystorden in thys Philosoph. And we haue shewed, that god and very blysfulnesse is all one thynge. Ber. That is soth (q I). Phi. Than mowe we conclude syberly, that the substaunce of god is set in thylke same good, and in none other place

Huc oks pariter venit: capti, Quos fallax ligat improbe catenis, Terrenas habitans libido mentes. Hic erit vobis requies laborum. &c.

Ometh all togyther nowe ye that bene ycaughte, & bounde wyth wicked chaynes, by the deceyuable delyte of earthlye thynges inhabytinge in your thought. Here shall be the rest of youre labour: here is the hauen stable in euer peryble. This alone is the open refute to wretches, that is to sayne, that ye that be combred and deceyued wyth worldly affections, cometh nowe to thys souerayn good that is God: that is refute to hem that wyl comen to hym. All the thynges that the ryuer Tagus yeueth you wyth hys golden graues, or els all the thynges that the ryuer Hermus yeueth wyth hys reed brynke: or þ Indus yeueth, that is nerre the hote partye of the worlde, that medleth the grene stones wyth the whyte, ne shulde not cleren the lokyng of your thought, but hyden rather your blynd corage within her derkenesse. All that loketh you here & eryeth and moueth your thoughtes, the earth hath norysshed it within his lowe caues. But þ shynyng, by which the heuen is gouerned, and whence that his strength, that eschewyth the derke ouerthrowyng of þ soule, & who so euer may knowen thylke lyghte of blysfulnesse, he wyll sayne, that the whyte beames of the sunne ne be not clere.

Attentior (inquã) cuncta enim firmissimis nexa rationibus cõstant. Tũlia, quanti, inquit, tu estimas bis, si bonum ipsum, quid sit, agnoueris? &c.

Boece. I assente me (quod I) for al thinges ben strõgly bounden wyth ryght ferme reasons. Philoso. Howe muche wylte thou prayse it, (q she) yf that thou knowe what thylke good is. Boece. I wol prayse it (quod I) by price wythout ende, yf it shall betyde me to knowe also togyther god that is good. Phi. Certes (q she) that shal I do the by ver reason, if that those thinges, that I haue cõcluded a lytle here before, dwellẽ ouelye in her graũtyng. B. They dwellen graũted to the (q I) þ is to sayne, as who sayth, I graunt to thy forsayd conclusyons. Philoso. I haue shewed the (q she) that the thynges that ben required of many folke ne bene not very goodes ne perfite. For they bene diuers that one fro þ other. And so as eche of hem is lacking to other, they ne haue no power to bringe a good, that is full and absolute. But than at erste bene they very good, whã they bene gathered togyder all in to one forme, and in to one werkynge: so that thylke thynge that is sufficyaunt, thylke same is power, and reuerence, nobleye, and myrth. And for the but yf all these thynges be all one same thynge, they ne haue not wherby that they me we be put in the nombre of thynges that ought to be required and desired. Boece. It is shewed (q I) ne hereof maye there no man douten. Phi. The thynges than (q she) that ne bene no goodes, whan they bene diuers, & whan they begynnen to be al one thyng, than bene they goodes, ne cometh it not thã by the getyng of vnyte, that they be maked goodes. Boece. So semeth it (quod I) Philo. But al thynge that is good (q she) graunteste thou that it be good by the participation of good or no. Boece. I graunt it (quod I) Philoso. Than must thou graũted (quod she) by semblable reason that one and good be one same thynge. For of thynges, of whyche the effecte nys not naturelly diuers, nedes her substaunce must be one same thyng. Boece. I ne

maye not denye it, (quod I) Philoso. Hastu then not knowen well (q I) that all thynge that is, hath so longe hys dwellyng and his habitaunce, as longe as it is one, but whan it forletteth to bene one, it muste nedes dyen and corrumpen togyther. B. In which maner (q I) Philo. Ryght as in beestes (quod she) whan the soule and the bodye bene conioyned in one, and dwellen togyther, it is cleped a beest: and whan her vnite is destroyed by the dysseueraūce of that one from that other, than sheweth it wel þ it is a dede thyng and it is no lenger no beast. And the body of a wight whyle it dwelleth in one fourme by coniunction of membres, it is well sene that it is a fygure of mankynde: And yf the parteyes of the bodye be deuyded and dysseuered that one from that other, that they destroye the vnite, þ body forleteth to be, that it was beforne. And who so wold renue in the same maner by all thynges, he shulde sene þ without dout euery thynge is in hys substaunce, as longe as it is one. And whan it forleteth to be one, it dyeth and perisheth. Boece. whā I consyder (quod I) manye thynges, I se none other. Philoso. Is there any thyng (q she) that in as muche as it lyueth naturelly, that forleteth the talent or the apetyte of his beynge, and desyreth to come to deathe and to corruption. Boece. If I consyder (quod I) the beastes that haue any maner nature of wyllyng and nyllyng, I ne fynde no beest but yf it be constrayned fro wythoutforthe, that forleteth or dyspyteth the entencion to lyuen and to duren, or that wyll hys thankes haste hym to dyen. For euerye beaste trauayleth hym to defende and kepe the sauacion of hys lyfe, and escheweth death and dystruction. But certes I doute me of herbes and trees, that ne haue no seiynge soules, ne no naturell workynges, seruynge to appetytes, as beastes haue: whether they haue appetyte to dwelle, and to duren. Philosoph. Certes (quod she) therof dare the not doute. Nowe loke vpon the herbes and trees, for they weren fyxte in suche place as bene conuenable to hem: in whyche places they mowe not dyen ne dyen, as longe as her nature maye defende hem. For some of hem weren in feldes, & some weren in mountaignes, and other were in mareys, and other cleauen on rockes, and some weren plentenus in fyndes. And yf any wyght enforce hym to beare hem in to other places, they weryen dye. For nature pruyeth to enuye thynge that is conuenyente to hym, and trauayleth that they ne dye, as longe as they haue power to dwellen and to lyuen. what wyte thou sayne of thys, that they drawen all her nourysshynges by her rootes, ryght as they hadde her mouthes yplonged within the earthes, and shenden by her mawes her wodde and her barke. And what wyte thou sayne of thys, that thylke thynge that is ryghte softe, as the marye is, that is alwaye hydde in the sceate all within, and that is defended from wythoute by the stedfastnesse of wodde, and that the vttereste barke is put ayenst the dystemperaunce of the heuen, as a defendoure, myghtye to suffren harme. And thus certes mayste thou well sene, howe great is the dyligence of nature. For all thynges renouelen and publyshen hem wyth seede ymultyplyed. Ne there nys no man, that ne wote well that they ne bene ryghte as a foundemente and edefyce, las to duren not onely for a tyme, but ryghte as for to dure perdurably by generatiō. And þ thynges the, that men wenē ne haue no soules, ne desyre they not by semblable reason to kepen that is hys, that is to sayne, that is accordynge to her nature in conseruation of her beyng and enduryng. For wherfore the bracerth lyghtnesse the flambes vp, and the weyghte pulleth the earth adowne, but for as muche as thylke places and thylke meuinges be conuenable to euerych of hem. And forsothe euery thynge kepeth thylke, that is accordynge & propre to hym, ryght as thynges that bene contrarious and enemies confunden hem. And yet the harde thynges as stones cleauen and holden her parties togyther right fast & harde, and defenden hem in withstādyng, that they ne departen lyghtly and yeuen place to hem, that breaken or hurtē hem: but natheless they retournen ayen soone in to the same thynges from whens they be drawen. But fyre sleeth and refuseth all deuyseron. Ne I ne treate not nowe here of wylful mouinges of the soule that is knowyng, but of naturell entencion of thynges, as thus: Ryght as we swalowen the meate that we receyuen, and ne thynke not on it, and as we draw our breath in slepyng, that we

we beren whyle we slepen. For certes in the bodies the loue of her lyuynges ne of her beynges, ne cometh not of the wyl nynges of the soule, but of the begynnynges of nature for certes thoroughe constraynynge cau-ses wyll desyreth & embraseth ful oft tymes he deth, that nature dreden, that is to sayn as thus: that aman maye be constrayned so by some cause, that his wyl desyreth and ta-keth the deathe, whyche that nature hateth & dreden full sore. And some tyme we sene the contrary, as thus: þ the wyll of a wyght hindreth and constrayneth that, that na-ture alwaye desyreth and requyreth, that is to say þ workes of generation, by the which generation onely dwelleth and is sustayned the longe durablyte of mortall thynges, as thus. Thys charite and this loue that euery thynge hatlye to hym selfe, ne cometh not of the mouynge of the soule, but of the entencio-on of nature. For the purueyaunce of God hathe yeuen to thynges, that bene create of hym thys, that is a full great cause to lyuen and to duren, for whyche they desyren natu-rally her lyfe, as longe as euer they mowen: for whych thou mayst not dreden by no ma-ner, that all thynges that bene anye where, that they ne requiré naturelly the ferme sta-blenesse of perdurable dwellynge, and eke the eschewyng of distruction.

Boece. I confesse (q I) that I se wel now, and certaynly withouten dout, the thynges that a whyle ago semeden vncertaine to me philoso. But (q she) thylke thynge that de-syreth to be and dwell perdurablye, he desy-reth to bene one: for yf that one were distroy-ed, certes bevnge shulde there none dwellen no wyght. Boece. That is sothe (quod I) Philo. Than (quod she) desyren all thynges one. Boece. I assent (q I) Phi. And I haue shewed (q she) that thilke same one is, thilke that is good. Boece. Yea forsoth (q I) Phi. All thynges than (quod she) requyren good, and thylke maist thou discreuen thus: Good is thylke thynge that euery wyght desyreth. Boece. There ne maye be thoughte no more ney thynge (quod I) for eyther all thynges be referred and brought to naught, and flo-ren wythout gouernoure dispoyled of one as of her propre heade, or els yf there be any thynge, to whyche that all thynges tenden and byen to, that thynge muste be the soue-rayne good of all goodes. Philosoph. Than sayde she thus: O my norice (q she) I haue great gladnesse of the, for thou haste fixed in thy herte the myddell sothfastnesse, that is to sayne the pyrche, but thys thynge hath be discouered to the, in that thou saydeste, that thou wystest not a lytel here before. Boece. what is that (quod I) Philo. That thou ne wystest not (quod she) whych was the ende of thynges, & certes that is the thynge that euery wyght desyreth. And for as muche as we haue gathered and comprehended, that good is thylke thynge that is desyred of all, than mote we nedes confessen, that good is the fyne of all thynges.

Quisquis profunda mēte vestigat verum, Cupitq; nullis esse deuius fal-lī, Ita se reuoluat intimi lucem visus &c.

Who so seketh sothe by a depe thought, and coueteth to bene disceyued by no mis wayes, let hym rollen and treaten wyth hym selfe, the lyght of hys in-warde syght: and let hym ga-theren ayen enclynynge in to a compase the longe mouynges of hys thoughtes. And let hym teachen hys corage, that he hath enclo-sed & hyde in hys treasours, all that he hath compassed or sought fro without: And than thylke thynge that the blacke cloudes of er-rour whylome had couered, shal lyght more clerely than Phebus hym selfe ne shyneth.

Glosa. who so wyl seke the depe grounded of sothe in hys thoughte, and woll not be disceyued by false propolicions, that gone a mysse from the trouth, let hym wel examine and rolle wythin hym selfe, the nature & pro-prietes of the thynge. And lette hym yet ofte sones examyne and rollē hys thoughtes by good deliberacion, or that he deme. And let hym teachen hys soule, that it hath by natu-rel principles kyndlyche phydde wythin it selfe, all the trouth, the which he ymagineth to bene in thynges wythout: and than al the darkenesse of hys mysmowynge, shall seme more euydently to the syght of hys vnderstā-dynge, than the sunne ne semeth to the sight without forth. For certes the body bringing the weyght of forgeting, ne hath not chaced

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out of your thought all the derknesse of your lustynge, for certaynlye, the seede of sothe holdeth and cleaueth wythin your corage, & it is stouked and excited by the wyndes and by the blastes of doctrine. For wherfore eis demen ye of your owne wyl ꝑ ryghtes whā ye be asked, but if so were that the norishing of reason ne lyued, yplunged in the depe of your herte, that is to sayne, howe shuld men demen the sothe of any thynge that were asked, and yf there were a roote of sothfastnesse that were yplunged and hyd in naturel prin cyples, the whyche sothfastnesse lyued wythin the depenesse of the thought. And yf so be, that the muse and the doctrine of Plato syngeth sothe, all that euerye wyght learneth, he ne doth nothynge eis than, but recordeth, as men recorden thynges that bene forpeten.

Tum ego, Platoni (inq;) vehementer assentior. Nam me horum iam secundo commemoras. Primum quod memoriam corpore contagione. &c.

Than sayde I thus. I accorde me gretly to Plato, for thou recordest and remembrest me these thynges yet the second tyme, that is to saye, fyrste whan I lefte my memory by the contrarious coniunction of the body with the soule: and eftsones afterwarde, whan I loste it confounded by thy charge and by the burdone of my sorow, & than sayd she thus.

If thou loke (quod she) fyrste the thynges that thou haste graunted, it ne shall not bene ryghte ferre, that thou ne shalte remembren the yike thynge, that thou saydest that thou nystest nat. Boece. what thynge (quod I) ꝑ. By whyche gouernemente (quod she) that this worlde is governed. Boece. I remembre it well (quod I) and I confesse well, that I ne wyste it naughte. But all be it so, that I se nowe from a ferre, what thou purposest, algates I desyre yet to herken it of the more playnlye. Philosp. Thou ne wondrest not (ꝙ she) a lytle here beforne, that men shuld doute that thys worlde is governed by God. Boe. Certes (quod I) ne yet ne doute I it nat ne I wyll neuer wene that it were to doute, as who sayeth, but I wote well that God governeth thys worlde. And I shall answere the by what reasons I am brought to this. Thys worlde (quod I) of so many diuers & contrarypous partyes, ne myght neuer have bene assembled in o forme, but yf there were one, that coniayned so many diuers thynges. And ꝑ same diuersite of her natures that it distroyen, that one fro that other muste departen, and vnioynen the thynges that bene conioyned, yf there ne were one that conteyned, that he hath conioyned and ybounde. Me the certaine order of nature ne shuld not brynge forth le orderyne mouynges, by places, by times, by doynges, by spaces, by qualytees, yf there ne were one that were ayer fast dwellinge, that ordeyned and disposeth these diuersytees of mouynges. And thylke thynge what so euer it be, by whyche that al thynges bene ymaked, and ladde, I clepe hym God, that is a worde that is vsed to al folkes. Philosp. Than sayd she: Syth thou feylste thus these thynges, I trowe that I haue lytle more to done, that thou myghtest of welfulnesse, hole and sounde, ne se ertsones thy countrey. But let vs loken the thynges that we haue purposed here beforne. Hast I nat nombred ꝙ sayde (quod she) that substaunce is in blysfulnesse. And we haue accorded that God is thylke same blysfulnesse. Boece. Yes forsoth (quod I). Philosp. And that to gouerne thys worlde (ꝙ she) ne shall he neuer have nede of none helpe fro wythout. For els yf he had nede of any helpe, he ne shulde not have no full sufficiaunce. Boe. Yes thus it moste nedes be (quod I). Philo. Then ordeyned he by him selfe alone al thynges (quod she). Boe. That may not be denyed (quod I). Philosp. And haue shewed that God is the same good. Boe. It remembreth me well (quod I). Philosp. Than ordeyneth he al thynges by thylke good (quod she) ſth he wherby we haue accorded to be good gouerneth all thynges by hym selfe. And he is a dey and a steyre, by whyche the edifyces of thys worlde is kepte stable & wythoute ruynynge. Boece. I accorde me gretly ꝙ I). And I haue apperceyued al ytle beforne, that ꝑ woldest saye thus. All were it so, yf it were by a thynne suspeccyon. Phi. I trowe wel (quod she). For as I trowe, thou ledest nowe more ententyfly the eye, to loken the very goodes. But nathelesse, ꝑ thing that I shall

I shall tell the, yet ne sheweth not lasse to lo
me Boece. what is that (quod I). Philoso.
ho as men trowe (quod she) and that right
lasse, that God gouerneth al thinges by the
wyl his goodnesse. And al these same thin
ges that I haue taughte the hasten hem by
natural entencyon to come to good, ther may
no man doubten that they ne bene gouerned
voluntaryly. And that they ne cõuerten hem
fro owne good wyll to her ordeynoure.
As that they bene accordyng and inclinyng
to her gouernour and to her kynge. Boece.
I wote nedes be so (quod I) for the realme
of lalde not seme blysful, yf there were a
rout of mysdrawynges in dyuers partyes,
fro the sauyng of obediente thynges, ne should
not be then. Philo. Is there nothynge (quod
she) that perpeth hys nature, that enforceth hym
to gone ayenst God. Boece. No, quod I. P.
And yf any thinge enforced hym to wyth
stande God, myghte it auayen at lasse ayen
wyn that we haue graunted to be almygh
ty by the right of blysfulnesse. Boece. Certes
quod I, all veterlye it ne myghte not auayle
wyn. Philoso. Then is there nothyng, quod
she that eyther maye or wyll wythstande to
thy souerayne God. Boece. I trowe not, q
I. Philoso. Then, quod she, is thylke the so
uerayne God, that all thynges gouernethe
lyngly, and ordeyneth hem softly. Boece.
Then sayd I thus, I delyte me, quod I, not
only in thendes or in the summe of the rea
sons that thou haste concluded and proued,
but thylke wordes that thou vsette, delyten
me much more, so that at lasse fooles, yf som
what reuden greate thynges, oughten bene
ashamed of hem selfe, that is to sayne, that
we fooles that reprehenden wyckedly thin
ges that touchen goddes gouernaunce, we
oughten bene ashamed our selfe. As I. that
sayd that God refuseth onely the werkes of
men, and ne entermeteth not of it. Philoso.
Thou haste well herde, quod she, the fables
of the poetes, how the graunters assayleden
wyn, to the goddes: but forsothe the debo
nayrefore of God dysposed hem as it was
worthy, yf is to sayn, distroyed yf giaũtes as
it was worthy. But wyt yf that we reyoné
togyther thylkesame reasons. For peraven
ture such cõiunction may stretten vp some
lyte sparke of soth. B. Do, q I, as lyste. P.
Wenest thou, quod she, yf God ne be almygh
ty. Boece. No man is in doute of it certes, q
I. Philoso. No wyght ne douteth it, yf he be
in hys mynde, q she. But he that is almygh
ty, there nys nothynge that he ne may. Boe.
That is soth, quod I. Philo. May God do
yuel, quod she. Boece. Nay forsoth, quod I,
Philo. Than is yuell nothynge (q she) syth
that he ne maye done none yuell, that maye
done all thynges. Boece. Scornest thou me
(q I) or els playest thou, or deceyuest thou
me, that haste so wonnen wyth thy reasons
the house of Dedalus so entrelasyng that it
is vnable to be vnlaced, yf thou other whyle
entrest there thou issuest, and other whyle is
suest there thou entrest. Ne foldest thou not
togyther by replication of wordes a maner
wonderfull cercle or enuyronnyng of yf sim
plicite dyuine. For certes a lyte here beton
whan thou began at blysfulnesse, thou lay
dest that it is souerayne good, and that god
is the blysfulnesse, for whyche thou yaue me
as a couenable yefte, that is to same, that no
wyght nys blysful, but if he be god also ther
wyth, and saydest eke, that yf soune of good
is the substaunce of God and of blysfulnesse.
And saydest that thylke one is thylke same
good, that is requyred and desyred of al the
kynde of thinges. And thou prouedest in dis
putyng, that God gouerneth all the thinges
of the worlde, by the gouernaunce of boun
tye: And saydest that al thinges wold obey
en to hym, and saydest that the nature of yuell
is nothynge. And these thynges shewdest
thou not wyth no reasons taken fro wyth
out, but by proues in cercles and homlyche
knowynge. The whyche proues drawen to
hem selfe her fayth and her accorde euerych
of hem of other. Philo. Than sayde she thus
I ne scorne not, ne playe, ne distreyne the: but
I haue shewed the thynge that is greateste
ouer al thynges, by the yefte of god, that we
whylom prayden. For thys is the fourme of
dyuine substaunce, that is such, that it ne fly
deth not into vtereste forayne thynges, ne re
ceyueth not no straunge thynges in hym.
But right as Permenides sayde in greke, of
thylke diuine substaunce: He sayd thus, that
thylke dyuine substaunce turneth the world
and the mouable cercle of thynges, whyle the
yike dyuine substaunce kepeth it self wyth
out mouynges, that is to sayne, that he mo
neth neuer mo, and yet it moueth al other thyn
ges

ges. But nathyelle, yf I haue shyped reasons that be not taken fro wythoute the compace of the thynge, of the whyche we treaten, but reasons that ben bestowed within compace there nys not why thou shuldest mervayen syth thou hast lerned by the sentence of Plato, that nedes the wordes mote bene cosyns to the thynges, of whyche they spoken.

Felix qui potuit boni, fontem vide re lucidū. Felix qui potuit grauis. ꝛc.



Ayfed is that man that may sene the clere welle of good: Blyssfull is he that maye vnbynden hym from the boundes of heuy earth. The poete of Thrace Orpheus, ꝑ whylom had ryght greate sorowe, for the death of hys wyfe. After that he had maked & constrayned by hys wepely songes, the wodes mouable to rēne, and had maked the ryuers to stonden styl, and had maked the hartes & hyndes to ioynen dredelesse her sydes to cruell lyons, to herken hys songe, and had maked that the hare was not agaste of ꝑ houde whych was pleased by songe: So whan the moost ardaunt loue of hys wyfe, brende the entrayles of hys brefte, ne the songes ꝑ had ouercomen all thynges, ne myghten not aswagen her lorde Orpheus, he playned hym of the heauen goddes, which that were cruell to hym, he went hym to the houses of the he: And he temꝑeed hys blandyshyng songes by resoumynge of strynges, and spake & songe in wepynge: all that euer he had receyued and laued out of the noble welles of his mother Caliope the goddesse. And he sange wyth as muche as he myght of wepynge, & wyth as much as loue, that doubled his sorowe myght yeuen hym and teach hym, and cōmoued the hell, and requyred & beseeched by swete prayer, the lordes of soules in hell of relesynges, that is to saye, to yelden hem hys wyfe. Cerberus the porter of hell, wyth hys thre heades was caught, & all abasshed of the new songe. And ꝑ thre goddesses, furyes and bengeresses of felonyes, that tormenten & agaīst the soules by anoye woxen sorouful and saye, and teares wepten for pyte. Tho was not the heade of Ixion tormented, by the ouerthrowynge wheele. And Tantalus, that was distroyed by the wodnesse of longe thurst, despysed the floodes to drynke. The foule that hyght Vultur, frat eateth the stomake or the gyserne of Tityus is so fulfylled of hys songe, that it nyll eten ne tyren no more. At the laste the Iuge of soules was moued to mysericordes and cryed: we bene ouercomē (q he) yeue we to Orpheus hys wyfe to beare hym company, he hath well ybought her by hys songes and hys dyties: but we wyll puttern alawe thys, and couenaunte in the yefte, that is to sayn, ꝑ tyl he be out of hel, yf he loke behynde hym, that hys wyfe shall come agayne vnto vs. But what is he that maye yeue a lawe to louers? loue is a greater lawe and a strenger to hym selfe than any lawe that me may yeuen. Alas, whan Orpheus and hys wyfe were almoost at the termes of the nyght, that is to sayne, at the laste bounders of hell, Orpheus loked backewarde on Eurydice hys wyfe, and loste her, and was deade. This table apertayneth to you all, who so euer he syeth or seketh to lede his thought vnto the soueraygne daye, that is to saye to clerenesse of soueraygne good. For who so euer be so ouercomen that he fixe his eyen into the pyt of hell, that is to sayne: who so euer sette hys thoughtes in erthly thynges, all ꝑ euer he hath drawē of ꝑ noble good celestiall, he leseth it, whan he loketh to the helles, thys is to sayne into lowe thynges of the earth.

¶ Thus endeth the thyrde boke of Boece, and here after folowerh the fourth.

Hec cum philosophia dignita te vultus, et oris grauitate seruata, leniter, suauiterq; cecinisset, Tum ego non diu penitus institi merorig oblitus. &c.

When Philosophie had songen softly & delectably the forsayd thynges keping ꝑ dignite of her chere, & the weyghte of her wordes, I the̅ that ne had all veterly forȝeten the wepyng and the mourynge that was set in myne herte, forbade the entencion of her, that entended yet to syne some other thynges.

O quod I thou that arte gyderesse of bey lyght, the thinges that thou hast sayd me herebefore, ben to me so clere and shewynge by the deuyne lokynge of hem, and by thy reasons that they ne mowen ben ouercomen. And thilke thynges that thou toldest me, all be it so that I had whylom forȝeten hem, for the sorowe of the wronge that hath be done to me: yet neuertheless they ne weren not de ryght vnknowen to me. But thys same is namely a ryght greate cause of my sorowe, so ꝑ the gouernour of thynges is good, yf that yuels mowe̅ ben by any wayes: or els yf that yuels passen wythout punyshyng, the which thyng only, how worthy is it to ben wodred vpon. Thou consydrest it well thy selfe certaynly. But yet to this thynge there is yet an other thynge ioyned more to be wondred vpon. For felonye is empereresse, and floureth ful of richesse, and bereue nys not all only wyth out medes, but it is cast downe, and eke forbroden vnder the fete of felonous folke: and it abyeth the tourmentes in stede of wycked frions. Of all whyche thynges there is no wyght maye marnayen ynough ne complayen, that such thynges be done in the reygne of god, that al thynges wote, and al thynges maye, and ne wyl not only but good thinges Then sayd she thus: Certes quod she that were a great marnayle, & an abashyng wyth out ende, and well more horrible then al the monsters, yf it were as thou weneste, that is to sayne, that in the ryghte ordayne house of so moch a father and an ordaynour of meyne that the vessels that ben foule and vyle, shuld ben honoured and beryed, and the precious vessels shuld ben defouled and vyle. But it is not so, for yf the thynges, that I haue concluded a lytel here beforne, ben kept hole and vnbraced, thou shalte well knowe by the authorite of god (of the whose reygne I spcke) that certes the good folke be alwaye myghty and shrewes ben alwaye outcaste and feble. Ne the vyces be neuer more wythout payne ne the vertues ne be not wythout mede. And that blysfulnesse cometh alway to good folke and infortune cometh alway to wicked folke And thou shalt well knowen many thynges of thys kynde, that shuld ceasen thy playntes and strengthen the wyth stedfast sadnesse. And for thou hast sene the forme of very blysfulnesse by me that haue whylom shewed it the, and thou haste knowen in whome blysfulnesse is set: al thynge treated, that I trowe be necessary to put forth, I shall shewen the the waye, that shall bryngen the ayen vnto thyne house: and I shall fyre fethers in thy thought, by which it maye aryse̅ in heyght, so that all tribulation ydone awaye, thou by my gydynge and by my pathe, and by my stedes, shalte mowen retourne hole and sounde into thy countrey.

Sunt etenim penne volucres mihi, Que celsa conscendunt poli. Quas ubi cu velox mens induit. &c.

When for thy swyfte fethers ꝑ surmounten the heyght of the heuen, when the swyft thought hath clothed it in the fethers, it dyspiseth the hatefull erthes, and surmounteth the rondenesse of the great ayre, and it seeth the clowdes behynde hys backe, & passeth the heyghte of the regyon of the fyre, that enchaufeth by the swyfte mouynge of the fyrmament, tyll that he aryseth into the houses, that beaten the sterres, and ioyneth the waye wyth the sunne Phebus, and felowshypped the waye of the olde colde Saturnus, & he ymaked a knyght of the clere sterre, that is to saye, whē the thought is made goddes knight, by the seruynge of clere trouthe to comen to the verye knowlege of god. And thilke soule reneth by ꝑ

sterre of sterres, in al the places there as the shynynge wyght is ypaynted, that is to seyne the wyght that is cloudelle. For on wyghtes that be cloudelle, it semeth that the heauen were paynted wyth dyuers ymages of sterres. And whē he hath done there ynough, he shall forleten the laste heuen, and he shall pre sen and wenden on the bache of the swyft fyr mament, and he shal be maked partyte of the worshypfull lyght of god. There holdeth the lorde of thinges the stepere of hys might, and attempreth the gouernementes of the worlde and the shynynge iuge of thynges, stable in hym selfe, gouerneth ꝑ swyft carte or wayne that is to seyne, the cyrculer mouynge of the sunne. And yf thy waye ledeth ꝑ ayen, so that thou be brought thyder, then wyll thou saye, that is the countrye that thou requyrest, of whych thou ne haddest no mynde: but nowe it remembreth me well, here was I borne, here wol I fulfil my degre, here wol I dwel. But yf the lyketh then to loken on the darke nesses of the earth, that thou haste forleten, then shalte thou sene, that these felonous tyrauntes, that the wretched people dre deth nowe, shullen ben eryled from thylke fayre countrey.

Tibi go pape inquã, vt magna pro mittis. Nec dubito, qui possis efficere tu modo quę cęptanctis, ne moreris.

Then sayd I thus: O I wōder me that thou beheteſt me so great thin ges. Ne I ne doute not that thou ne mayst well performe that thou beheteſt: but I praye the thys that thou ne tarye not, to tel me thylke thynges, that thou hast moued. Ph. Fyrst (quod she) thou muste ne des knowe, that good folke ben alway stroge and myghtye, and the shrewes ben feble and deserte, and naked of all strengthes. And of these thynges certes euerych of hem is decla red and shewed by other. For as good and euell ben two contraries, yf so be that good be sted faste, then sheweth the febleſſe all openly. And yf thou knowe clerely the freinelle of y uel, the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. But for as moche as the fayth of my sentence shal be the more ferme and haboundaunt, I woll goue by that one way and by that other, and I woll confermе the thynges that ben pro poſed nowe on thys syde, and nowe on that syde. Two thynges there ben, in whyche the effecte of all the dedes of mankynde standeth that is to sayne, wyll and power: and yf that one of these two fayleth, there nys nothynge that maye be done. For yf that wyll lacketh, there nys no wyghte that vndertaketh to do that he wol not done: And yf power fayleth the wyll nys but ydle, and stante for naught. And therof cometh it, that yf thou se a wyght that wolde getten that he maye not gette, thou mayst not doute that power ne fayleth hym to hauen that he wolde. Boece. Thys is open and clere (quod I) ne it ne maye not bene denyed in no maner Philo. And yf thou se a wyght (quod she) that hath done that he wolde done, thou nyst not doute, that he ne hath had power to done it. Bo. No quod I) Ph. And in that that euerye wyght maye in that me holden hem mighty to done a thinge In so moche as a man is myghtye to done a thynge in so moche men holde hym myghty: and in that that he ne maye, in that men de men hem to be feble. Boece. I confelle it well (quod I) Phi. Remembre the quod she that I haue gathered and shewed by the forsayde reasons that all the entencion of the wyll of mankynde, whyche that is ladde by dyuers studyes, hasteth to comen to blysfulnelle. Boece. It remembreth me wel quod I) that it hath bene shewed. Philolo. And recordeth the nought then (quod she) that blysfulnelle is thylke same good that men requyren. for that when blysfulnelle is requyred of all. Boece. It recordeth me not (quod I.) For I haue it alwaye in my memoure fyxed Phi. All folke then (quod she) good and eke badde enforcen hem wythout differrence of entencion to comen to good. Boece. Thys is dere conſequence (quod I) Philolo. And certayne is, quod she that by gettynge of good be men maked good. Boece. That is certayne (quod I Philo. Then getten good men that they desyren. Boece. So it semeth (quod I. P. But wycked folke (quod she) yf they getten the good that they desyren, they ne mowen not be wycked. Boece. So it is (quod I P. Then so as that one and that other (quod she) desyren the good, and the good folke getten the good, and not the wycked folke: Then it is no doute that the good folke ne be myghty

and

and wycked folke be feble. Boece. Who so that euer douteth of thys, he ne maye not cõsydre the nature of thynges ne the cõsequẽce of reasons. Philosd. And ouer thys, quod she, yf that there ben two thynges that haue one purpose by kynde, and that one of hem exercyseth and performeth that same thynge by naturell office, and that other ne may not haue thylke office naturell, but folowyth by other maner, the is couenable to nature, him that accomplyssheth hys purpose kyndly, and yet he ne accomplyssheth not hys owne purpose: whether of these two demest thou for more meghtye? Boece. Yf that I conceyue wel I, that thou woldest saye, algates I de syre yet to herken it more playnlye of the. Philosd. Thou nyte not thē denye, quod she, but the mouement of goynge nys in men by kynde. Boece. No forsoth, quod I. Philo. Se thou douteth not, quod she, that thylke naturell office of goynge, ne be the office of fete. Boece. I ne doute it not, quod I. Philosd. Then, quod she, yf that a wyghte be myghtye to moue and goeth vppon hys fete, and another, to whome thylke naturell office of fete lacketh, enforseth hym to go crepynge on hys hande, whyche of these two ought to be holden the more myghtye by right. Boece. Knyette forth, quod I, the remenaunt. Philosophia. For no wyght ne douteth that he that may gone by naturell office of fete, ne be more myghtye then he that ne maye not. But the souerayne good, quod she, that is euen lyke purposed to the good and to the badde. The good folke seken it by naturell office of vertues, and shrewes enforcen hem to getten it by dyuers couetyses of earthly thynges, whyche that nys no naturell office to getten thylke souerayne good. Trowest thou that it be any otherwyse? Boece. Nay, quod I. For the consequence is open and the wynge of thynges that I haue graunted, that nedes good folke moten ben myghtye, and shrewes moten bene feble and vnmyghtye. Philosophia. Thou rennest aryght before me, quod she, and thys is the iudgement, that is to sayne, I iuge of ryghte, as these leches bene wonte to hopen of syche folke, when they apperceyuen that nature is trauelled and wythstanderth to the maladye. But for I se the nowe all redy to the wythstandynge, I shal shewe the more thylke and couenable reasons. For loke howe greatlye shewyth the feblenesse and infyrmite of wycked folke, that ne mowen not comen to that her naturell entencion leadeth hem: And yet almoste thylke naturell entencion constrayneth hem. And what were to demen then of shrewes, yf thylke naturell helpe had forletten hem, the whyche naturell helpe of entencion goeth alwaye before hem, and is so greate, that vneth it maye be ouercomen? Conyder then howe great defaute of power, and howe greate feblesse there is in wycked felonous folke, as who sayeth, ỳ greater thynge that is coueyted, and the desyre not accomplyshed, of the lasse myght is he that coueyeth it, and maye not accomplyshe. And for thy philosophie sayeth thus by souerayne good: Ne shrewes ne requyren not lyght nedes ne vayne games, whych they ne maye not folowen ne holde, but they sayen of thylke name of the heyght of thynges, that is to sayne, souerayne good. Ne these wretches ne comen not to the effecte of souerayne good, the which they enforcen hem onely to getten by myghtes and by dayes, in getynge of whych good the strength of good folke is ful wel sene. For ryght as thou myghtest demen hym myghty of goynge ỳ goeth on hys fete tyll he myght comen to thylke place, fro the whyche place there ne laye no waye further to be goue: ryghte so muste thou nedes demen hym for ryght myghty, whych that getteth and attaynyth to the ende of all thynges, whyche that bene to desyren, beyonde the whyche ende there nys nothynge to desyre. Of the whych power of good folke men maye conclude, that we wycked men semen to be barayne and naked of all strength. For why forletten they vertues & folowen vyces, nys it not for that they ne knowen not the goodes? But what thynge is more feble and more caytyfe, then is the blyndnesse of ignoraunce? or els they knowe wel whych thynges they ought folowen, but lechery and couetyse ouerthroweth hem myscurned. And certes so dothe dyscemperaunce to feble men, that mowe not withstonden ayen these vices. Ne knowe they not wel that they forletten the good wylfullye, and tournen hem wylfully to vyces. And in thys wyse they ne forleten not onely to be myghty, but they forleten al vtterly in any wyse for to

hem. For they that loseth the comune lyne of all thynges that ben, they loseten also ther-wythall for to ben. And peraventure it shuld semen to some folke, that thys were a mat-tayne to sayne, that shrewes, wherby that con-teynen the mayne parties of men, ne bene not, ne haue no beynge. But nathelesse it is so, and thus stante thys thinge. For they that be shrewes, I denye not, but that they be shrewes, but I denye symply and playnly that they ne be not, ne haue no beynge. For ryght as thou myghtest sayne of the carayne of a man, that it were a dede man: so graunt I wel forsoth that vicious folke ben wycched, but I ne may not absolutely and symplye graunt that they ben. For thylke thynge that with holdeth or-dre and kepeth nature, thylke thynge is and hath beynge. But what thynge sayeth that, that is to saye, he that forleteth natureli ordre he forleteth thylke beynge that is set in hys nature. But thou wolt sayne, þ shrewes mo-wen. Certes that ne denye I not: but certes her power ne dyscendeth not of strength, but of feblenesse, for they mowen done wycked-nesse, the whyche they ne myght not, yf they myghten dwellen in the forme and in the do-ynge of good people. And thylke power she-weth euydently, þ they mowé ryght naught For so as I haue gadred and proued a lyteli here before, that euyll is not, and so as shre-wes may only but shrewdnesse. Thys conclu-syon is al clere, that shrewes ne mowé ryght naught, ne haue no power. And for as moch as thou vnderstandest wherch is the strength of this power, I haue defynyshed a lyteli here before, that no thynge nys so myghty as so uereyne good. Boece. That is soth (q I) Phi. And thylke sourayne good maye done none euell. Boece. Certes no (q I) Philo. Is there any wyght thé (q she) that weneth that men mowen done al thynges. Boe. No man (q I) but yf he be out of hys wyt. Phi. But certes shrewes mowen don euels (quod she) Boece. Yea wolde god (quod I) that they ne myghten done none. Phi. Then (quod she) so as he that is myghty to done onely good thin-ges, he maye done all thynges, and they that bene myghtye to done euell thynges, ne mo-wen not all thynges, then is it open thynge and manyfest, that they that mowen done e-uell ben of lasse power. And yet to proue this sentayn there helpeth me thys, that I haue shewed here before, that all power is to be nombred amonge thinges that men oughten requyre. And I haue shewed that all thy-ges that oughten bene desyred be referred to god, ryghte as to a maner beygte of her na-ture: but for to mowen done euell and felo-nye, ne maye not ben referred to god. Thus is not euell of the nombre of thynges that oughten to bene desyred and requyred. Thus is it open and clere that the power ne the ma-nyng of shrewes nys no power. And of all these thynges it sheweth well that the good folke ben certaynly myghty, and the shrewes doutelle vnmyghty. And it is clere and apert that thylke sentence of Plato is very a fals, that sayeth that onely wyse men maye done that they desyren, and shrewes mowen done ten that hem lyketh, but that they desyren, that is to sayne to come to sourayne good, they ne haue no power to accomplysshe that. For shrewes done what hem lyste, when by the thynges in wherch they desyren, they wo-nen to attayne to thylke good that they des-ren, but they ne getten ne attayne not therto for vyces ne comen not to effectuelle.

Quos videt sedere celsos Poly culmine regis purpura claros nitente. &c.

Who so that the couertures of her bayne apparayles myght stryken of these proude hynges, that thus seest syttem an hygh in her chayres glytterynge in shynynge purpure, enuyron-ned wyth sorowfull armures, manassynge wyth cruell mouth, blowynge by woodnesse of herte, he shulde sene that thylke leades bo-ren wythin her corages full streyte chaynes: for lecherye tourmenteth hem on that one syde wyth gredye denynes and troublable yre, that stryketh in hem the floode of trou-blynges, tourmenteth on that other syde, her thoughte or sorowe halte hem wery and penaught, or flydynge and dyscreyynge hope tourmenteth hem. And therfore sythe thus streit one heed, that is to sayne, one tyraunt beateth so many tyrannyes, then ne doth thylke tyraunt not that he desyreth sythe he is caste downe wyth so many wycked leades, that is to sayne, so many vyces that bene so

wyckedly

ypcdily lordshyps ouer hym.

Vides ne igitur quãdo in ceno ꝓ
pe voluantur, que ꝓbitas lucere ref-
plendeat, in quo perſpicuum eſt nunq̃
bonis ꝓmia. ꝛc.

SEeſt thou not thé in how greate
fylthe theſe shrewes ben vntap-
ped, and wyth whyche clerneſſe
theſe good folke shynen. In this
ſhe weth it well that to good folk
ne lacked neuer mo her medes, ne shrewes
ſaken neuer more tourmentes. For of al thin
ges that be done, thylke thynge for whyche
eny thynge is done, it ſemeth as by ryghte,
that thylke thynge be ꝑ mede of that, as thus
yf a man renneth in the ſtadye or in the for-
lange for the crowne: then lyeth the mede in
the crowne for whych he réneth. And I haue
lerned that blyſſfulneſſe is thylke ſame good
for whych that all thynges ben done. Thé is
thylke ſame good purpoſed to the werkes of
mankynde, ryght as a cómune mede, whych
mede ne maye not be dyſceuered from good
folke: for no wyght as by ryght, from them
ſelfe that hym lacketh goodneſſe, ne ſhall be
deped good: for whyche thynge folke of good
maners her medes ne forſake hem neuer mo
for al be it ſo that shrewes waren as woode
as hem lyſt ayenſt good folke, yet neuertheleſſe
the crowne of wyſemen, ne ſhall not fal-
len ne fade fro forayne shrewdneſſe, ne benym
men not fro ꝑ corage of good people her ꝓ-
pre honour. But yf any wyght reioyſed hym
of goodneſſe, that he had taken fro wythout,
as who ſayeth, yf a man had hys goodneſſe
of any other mã then of hym ſelfe: certes he ꝑ
naue hym thylke goodneſſe, or elſ ſome other
wyght myghte bynome it hym. But for as
moche as to euery wyght hys ꝓpre bounte
yeueth hym hys mede, then at erſt ſhal he ſay
hym of mede when he ſouleteth to be good.
And at the laſt, ſo as al medes ben requyred,
lat mé wenen ꝑ they be good, who is he that
nolde deme, that he that is ryght myghtye of
good were parteleſſe of mede. And of what
mede ſhal he be reguerdoned. Certes of right
fayre mede & ryght great, abouen all medes.
Remembre the of thilke noble corallarie ꝑ I
naue the a lytell here beforne, & gather it to-
gyther in thys maner. So as god hym ſelfe
is blyſſfulneſſe, then is it clere & certayne, that
all good people ben maked blyſſfull, for they
ben good, and thylke people that ben blyſſful,
it accordeth and is conenable to be goddes.
Then is ꝑ mede of people ſuche, that no day
ne ſhall empayren it, ne no wyckednеſſe ſhall
dyſken it, ne power of no wyght ne ſhall not
amenuſe it, that is to ſayne, that bene maked
goddes. And ſyth it is thus, that good mẽ ne
faylen neuer more of her mede, certes no mã
ne may doute of the vndepartable payne of
ſhrewes, that is to ſayne, ꝑ the payne of ſhre-
wes departeth not from hem ſelfe neuer mo.
For ſo as good and euell, and payne & medes
be contrarye, it mote nedes be, that ryght as
we ſe betyden in guerdone of good, that alſo
mote the payne of the yuel anſwere by the cõ
trarye partyes to ſhrewes. Nowe then ſo as
bountye and prowes ben mede to good folke
alſo is ſhrewdneſſe it ſelfe tourmẽt to ſhrewes.
Then who ſo euer is entecched and defouled
wyth payne, he ne douteth not, that he is en-
tecched and defouled wyth euell. Yf ſhrewes
then wollen prayſen hem ſelfe, may it ſemen
to hem that they ben wythoutẽ party of tour
ment, ſyth they ben ſuche that the vttreſt wic
kedneſſe, ꝑ is to ſaye, wycked thewes, whych
is the vttreſt & woiſt kynde of ſhrewdneſſe, ne
defouleth ne entecheth not hem only, but en-
feebleth & enuenymeth greatly. And alſo loke
on ſhrewes, that ben the contrarye partye of
good men, howe great payne ſclouſhypeth
and fouleth hem: for thou haſt lerned a lytel
here beforne, that all thynge that is and hath
beynge, is one, and thylke ſame one is good:
then is thys ꝑ conſequence, ꝑ it ſemeth well,
that all thynge ꝑ is & hath beynge, is good, ꝑ
is to ſayne, as who ſayeth, that beyng, vnite
& goodneſſe is al one. And in thys maner it
followeth then, ꝑ al thynge that fayleth to be
good, it ſhynteth for to be & for to haue anye
maner beyng: wherfore it is ꝑ ſhrewes ſhyn
ten for to be ꝑ they weren. But thylke other
forme of mãkynde, that is to ſayne, ꝑ fourme
of the body wythout, ſheweth that theſe ſhre
wes weren whylom men, wherfore whyen
they bene peruerted and tourned into ma-
lyce, certes thé they haue forlorne the nature
of mankynde: But ſo as only bountye & ꝓ-
wеſſe maye enhauſen euery man, ouer men:
then mote it nedes be that ſhrewes, whyche

that hyperdenelle hath take oute of the condycyon of mankynde, hene put vnder the meyte and desyre of men. Then betydeth it, that yf thou seest a wyghte wyche that is transtourned into dyces, thou mayest not wene that he be a man: for yf he be ardaunt in auarice, and that he be a rauenour by vyolence of fayne sychelle, thou shalte sayne that he is lyke a wolfe. And yf he be felonous and wythouten reste, and exercyse hys tonge to chydynges, thou shalte lykē hym to the hounde. And yf he be a pyryy awaytour hydde, and reioyseth hym to rauyth by wyles, thou shalte sayne hym lyke to the fore whelpes. And yf he be dystempred & quaketh for yre, men shall wenen that he beareth the corage of a lyon. And yf he be dredful and slyenge, and dredeth thynges wyche that ne oughten not to be dredde, men shal hold hym lyke to the harte. And yf he be slowe and asonyed and lache, men shall holde hym lyke to an asse. And yf he be lyghte and vnstedfaste of corage, and chaungeth aye his studyes, mē shall holde hym lyke to the bryddes. And yf he be plonged in foule and vncleane luxuryes, he is wythholden in the foule delyces of the foule sowe. Then folowēth it, þ he that forleeth bounte and prowesse, he forleeseth to be a man, syth he ne maye not passen in the condicion of god, he is turned into a beest.

Vela Naricii ducis, Et vagas pelago rates, Eurus appulit insule Pulchra qua residens dea, Solis edita semine. &c.

EUrus the wynde aryued the sayles of Ulixes duke of the coutre of Narice and hys wandrynge shyppes by the see into þ yle ther as Circes þ fayre goddes doughter of the sunne dwelleth, that medleth to her newe gestes, drynkes that ben touched and maked wyth enchaūtementes. And after that hyr hande myghty ouer the herbes had chaūged hyr gestes into dyuers maners, that one of hem is couered hys face wyth forme of a Boor, that other is chaunged into a Lyon of the countre of Marmouike, and hys nayles & hys trehe weren. That other of hem is newlyche chaunged into a wolfe, and howleth when he wolde wepe, that other goeth bebaylly in the house as a Tygre of Inde. But all be it so that the godheed of Mercury that is cleped the bryde of Archady hath had mercy of the duke Ulixes beseged wyth dyuerse yuelles, and hath vnbounden hem fro the pestilence of hys hostelle, algates the towers & the maryners hadden by thys ydrawen into hyr mouthes, and dronken the wycched dryckes. They that weren woxen swyne, hadden by thys pchaunged hyr meate of bread, for to eaten aboyne of Dokes. None of hir lyuynes ne dwelleth wyth hem hoole, but they haue lost the voyce and the body, only her thought dwelleth wyth hem stable, that weepeth and bewayleth the monstruous chaungynge that they suffren. O ouer lyghte hande, as wyte sayeth feble and lyghte is the hande of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaūgeth the bodyes of folke into beestes to regarde and to compassion of mutacyon that is maked by dyces, ne the herbes of Circes ne be not myghty, for al be it so that they may chaungen the lymmes of the body, algate yet they may not chaunge the hertes, for wythin is yhyd the strength & the vygoure of mē in the secretour of hyr hertes, that is to sayne, the strength of reason, but thylke venymes of dyces to drawē a mā to hem more myghtely then þ venym of Circes, for dyces bene so cruell that they perisse and thorowe passen the courage wythin, and though they ne anoye not the body, yet dyces wooden to destroyen men by wounde of thought.

Tu ego fateor, inq, nec luxuria dici video vicios, tam et si humani corporis speciem ferucnt. &c.

THen sayd I thus: I confesse & am aknowe it (q I) ne I ne let not that men maye saye, as by ryght, that shrewes ben chaunged in to beestes, by the qualite of her soules, all be it so that they kepen yet the forme of the bodye of mankynde: but I wolde not of shrewes, of whych the thought cruell and woode, woodeth alwaye to the destruccion of good men, that it were lefull to hem to done that.

Certes (quod she) ne it is not lefull to hem

as

as I shall wel shewe the in conuenable place: but nathelesse yf so were that thilke that men wene ben lefful to shrewes, were bynommed hem, so that they ne myght not anoyen or done harme to good men, certes a great partye of the payne to shrewes shulde ben alleged and releued. For all be it so that it ne seme credyble thynge peraduenture to some folke, that it moste nedes be ꝑ the shrewes ben more wrecches and sely, whan they may full doone and parfourme that they coueyten, than yf they myght not accomplysse that they coueyten: for yf so be that it be wretchydnesse to wylne vndon yuel, than is it more wretchednesse to mowe done yuell, without which mowyng, the wretched wyl shulde langurshe without effecte. Than sythe euerye of these thynges hath his wretchydnesse, that is to sayne, wyl vndone yuell, and mowyng to doone yuell, it moste nedes be that they shrewes be constrayned by her vnselynesses, that wolen and mowen and parfourmen felonyes and shrudnesses. Boece. I acorde me (ꝙ I) but I desyre greatly that shrewes losten soone thylke vnselynesse, that is to sayn, that shrewes weren depryued of mowyng to done yuel. Phi. So shulen they (ꝙ she) soner peraduenture than thou woldeste, or soner than they hem selfe wene: for there nys nothing so late in so shorte boundes of thys lyfe, that is longe to abyde, namely to a courage immortell. Of whyche shrewes the grete hope and the hye compassynges of shrudnesse, is ofte destroyed by a hedy ende or they be ware. And that thyng stablyshed to shrewes, the ende of her shrudnesse, for yf that shrudnesse maketh wretches than must he nedes be most wretche that longest is a shrewe, the whyche wicked shrewes wolde I demyn aldermooste carefully and vnsely, yf her shrewdnesse ne were fynyshed at lest way by veterell dethe. For yf I haue concluded sothe of the vnselynesse of shrewdnes, than sheweth it plainly, that thilke wretched nes is wythouten ende, the whych is certayn to be perdurable. Boece. Certes (ꝙ I) thys conclusyon is harde & wonderfull to graunte. But I knowe well that it accordeth moche to thynges that I haue graunted here beforne. Phylo. Thou hast (ꝙ she) ryght estymacyon of thys. But who so euer wene that it be a harde thynge to accorde hym to a conclusyon, it is ryght that he shewe that somme of ꝑ premisses ben false, or els he mote shewe that the collacyon of proposeyons nys not spedeful to a necessarye conclusyon. And yf it ne be not so, but ꝑ the premysses ben ygraunted, there nys not why he shulde blame the argument. For thys thynge that I shall tell the nowe, ne shall not seme lasse wonderfull, but of the thynges that ben taken. Also it is necessarye, as who sayth it foloweth of that which that is purposed beforne. Boe. What is that (ꝙ I) Phi. Certes (ꝙ she) that is, ꝑ these wycked shrewes be more blyssfull or elles lasse wrecches that abyen ꝑ tourmentes that they haue deserued, than yf no payne of Iustyce ne chastysed hem. Ne thys ne saye I not nowe, for that any mã might thynke that the maners of shrewes ben corryged & chastysed by vengeaunce, and that they be brought to the ryght waye by the drede of tourment, ne for that they yeuen to other folkes ensample to flyen fro vyces. But I vnderstande yet in another maner, that shrewes ben more vnsely whan they ne be not punysshed, all be it so that there ne be had no reason or law of correction ne none ensample of lokynge. Boece. And what maner shall that ben (ꝙ I) other than hathe be tolde here beforne. Phi. Haue we not graunted than (ꝙ she) that good folke ben blyssfull, and shrewes ben wretches. Boece. yes (ꝙ I) Philo. Than (ꝙ she) yf that anye good were added to the wretchednesse of any wyght nys he not more weleful, than he that ne hathe no medlyng of good in hys solitarye wretchednes. Boece. So semyth it (ꝙ I.) Philo. And what sayest thou than (ꝙ she) of thylke wretche that lacketh al goodes, so that no good nys medled in his wretchednesse, and yet ouer all hys wyckednesse, for whyche he is a wretche, that there be yet another yuell anered and knyt to hym, shall not men demen hym more vnsely, than thylke wretche, of whyche the vnselynesse is releued by the participacyon of some good. Boece. Why sholde he not (ꝙ I.) Phi. Than certes (ꝙ she) han shrewes whan they ben punysshed somwhat of good anered to hyr shrewdnesse, that is to sayne, the same payne that they suffre, which that is good, by ꝑ reason of Iustice. And whã thilke same shrewes escapen without tourmẽt, thã haue they somwhat more of yuel, yet ouer the wyckednesse that they han done, that is to sayn, defaute of

paynes, whiche delaute of payne thou haste graunted is yuell, for the deserte of trionye.
Boece. I ne maye not denye it (quod I) Phi. Whoche more than (quod she) ben shrewes vnselye whan they ben wrongfully deliuered fro payne, than whā they ben punished by rightfull vengeaunce. But thys is open thynge and clere, that it is ryght that shrewes ben punyshed, and it is wyckednesse and wronge that they escapen unpunyshed. Boece. Who might denye it (quod I) Philo. But (quod she) may anye man denye that all that is ryght ne is good: and also the contrarye, that all that is wronge is wycked. Boece. Certes (quod I) these thynges ben clere ynough, and that we haue concluded a lytell here beforne. But I pray the that thou tel me yf thou accordest to letten no tourment to the soules, after that the body is ended by the deth, that is to sayn vnderstandest thou aught, that soules haue anye tourment after the dethe of the bodye. Phi. Certes (quod she) yea, and that ryght great of whyche soules (quod she) I trowe that some ben tourmented by asprenesse of payne, and some soules I trowe ben exercysed by a pourgynge mekenesse, but my counsayle nys nat to determyne of thys paynes. But I haue trauayled and tolde yet hyderto, for thou shuldest knowe that the mowynge of shrewes, whyche mowynge the semeth to be vnworthy, nys no mowynge, and eke of shrewes, of whyche thou playnedest that they ne were nat punyshed that thou woldest se that they ne weren neuer mo withouten the tourmentes of her wyckednesse. And of the lycence of the mowynge to done yuell, that thou playdest that it myght sone be ended, & that thou woldest fayne lernen that it ne shulde nat longe endure. And that shrewes ben more vnsely yf they were of lenger durynge, and moost vnsely yf they weren perdurable. And after thys I haue shewed the, that more vnsely ben shrewes whan they escapen without her ryghtfull payne, than whan they bene punyshed by ryghtfull vengeaunce. And of thys sentence folowyth it, that than ben shrewes constrayned at the laste with moost greuous tourment, whā men wene that they ne be nat punyshed. Boece. Whan I consyder thy reasons (quod I) I ne trowe nat that men sayn any thynge more verely. And yf I tourne ayen to the studyes of men, who is he to whom it shulde seme, that he ne shulde nat only lernen these thynges, but eke gladly herken hem. Philo. Certes (quod she) so it is, but men maye nat, for they haue theyr eyen in woont to the derkenesse of erthly thynges, that they ne maye nat lyfte hem vp to the lyght of clere sothfastnesse. But they bē lyke to bydes of whych the night lyghteneth her labynges, and the day blyndeth hem. For whā men loken nat the ordre of thynges, but her lustes and talentes, they wene that eyther the leue or the mowynge to done wyckednesse, or els the scapynge withoute payne be welefull. But consyder the iugemēt of the perdurable lawe for yf thou conforme thy courage to the best thynges, thou ne hast no nede of no Juge to peuen the pryce or mede, for thou hast ioyned thy selfe to the moost excellent thynges. And yf thou haue enclined thy studies to the wycked thynges, ne seke no foreyne wrekery out of thy selfe, for thou thy selfe hast thrust thy selfe in no wycked thynges, ryght as thou mightest lokē by diuers tymes the soule erth and the heuen, & that all other thynges syen fro without, so that thou were in neyther ne se nothynge more. Than sholde it semen to the, as by only reason of lokyng, that thou were nowe in the sterres & nowe in the erth, but the people loketh nat on these thynges. What than, shall we than aproche vs to hem that I haue shewed that ben lyke to beestes. And what woldest thou sayn of thys, yf that a man had al forlorne hys sight, and had forgeten that he euer sawe, and wened that nothing fayled him of perfection of mankynde. Nowe we whych mightē sene the same thynges, wold we nat sayne that he were blynde, ne also ne accordeth nat the people to that I shal sayn, the which thing is fulfeyned by as strounge foundementes of reason, that is to sayn, that more vnsely ben they that dō wronges to other folke, than they that the wronge suffren. Boe. I wolde heren thilke same reasons (quod I) Philo. Denyest thou (quod she) that all shrewes ne ben worthy to haue tourment? Nay (quod I) Philo. But (quod she) I am certayne by many reasons, that shrewes ben vnsely. Boece. It accordeth (quod I) Phil. Than ne doutest thou not (quod she) that thylke folke that ben worthy of tourment, that they ne be wrecches. Boece. It accordeth well (quod I) Philoso. If thou were

than

ne seette a luge or a iustycer of thynges, whe
ther iuste thou that men shulde tourmen-
ten hem that hadde done wronge, or elis hem
that suffred the wronge. Boece. I doute nat
(q I) that I nolde do sufficient satisfaction,
to hem that haue suffred wronge, by the so-
rowe of hem that hath doone wronge. Phi-
lo. Thanne semeth it (q she) that the doer of
wronge is more wrecche, than he that suffred
wronge. Boece. That folweth well (q I)
philo. Thanne (q she) by these causes and by
other causes, that ben enforced by the same
rate, that fyrthe or synne by the propre nature
ne maketh men wrecches, and it sheweth
wel, that the wronges that men don nys nat
the wrecchednesse of hym that receyueth the
wronge, but the wrecchednesse of hym that
hathe the wrong. But certes (q she) these ora
tours or aduocates done all the contrary, for
they enforcen hem to commoue the Juges to
haue pyte of hem that done the grenuances
and the wronges, the which shrewes it were
a more couenable thynge, that the accu-
sours or aduocates, nat wroth, but pyteous
and debonayre ledden tho shrewes that haue
done wronge to the iugement, eyght as men
leden syke folke to the leche, for that they shul
den seken out the maladyes of synne by tour
ment. And by thys couenant eyther the en-
tente of aduocates shulde cessen in all, or elis
yf the offyce of the aduocates wolde better
profyten to men, it shuld be tourned in to the
habyte of accusacyō, that is to sayn, they shul-
den accuse shrewes and nat excusen hem. And
eke the shrewes hem selfe, yf it were lefull to
hem to sene at any eyghe the vertue that they
haue forletten, and sawen that they shuld put
en adowne the frythes of her vyces by the
tourmentes of paynes, they ne oughten nat
eyght for ꝑ recompensacyon, for to getē hem
honour and prowesse, whiche that they haue
lafte, demen and holde that the yke paynes
weren tourmentes to hem, and eke they wol
den refuse the attendaunce of her aduocates,
and taken hem selfe to her Juges and to her
amsours, for ꝑ which it betydeth, that as to
the wyse folkes, there nys no place yletten to
hate, ꝑ is to sayne, that hate ne hath no place
amonge wyse men. For no wight nyl hatem
good men, but yf he were ouer moche a foole
and for to hatem shrewes, it nys no reason for
eyght as languyssyhynge is maladye of body
eyghte so ben vyces and synne maladye of cou
rage. And so as we ne deme nat that they
whyche that ben syke of her body, ben worthy
to ben hated, but rather worthy of pyte. ne el
more worthy nat to ben hated, but for to ben
had in pyte ben they, of which the thoughtes
ben constrayned by felonous wyckednesse,
that is more cruell than any languyssyhynge
of body.

Quid tātos timat excitare motus,
Et propria facium sollicitate manu:
Di mortem petitis, propinquat ipsa,
Sponte sua, volucres nec remoratur
equos. &c.

What delyteth you to excyten so
great mouynge of hatredes, and
to hasté and busyen the fatal dis-
posycyon of your deth with your
propre handes, that is to sayn, by
batayls or contek. For yf ye aren the dethe,
it hasteth hym of hys owne wyll, ne dethe ne
taryeth nat hys swyfte horse. And the men
that the serpentes, and the lyon, and the ty-
gre, and the beere, and the bore, seken to sleen
wyth theyr tethe, yet thylke same men seken
to sleen euerych of hem other wyth swerde.
Lo, for her maners ben dyuers and discor-
daunt, they mouen bnryghtful hostes & cruel
batayles, and wylnen to perysshe by entre-
chaungynge of dartes, but the reason of cru-
elte nys nat ynough rightful, wyte thou tha
yelden a couenable guerdon to the desertes
of men. loue rightfully good folkes, and haue
pyte on shrewes.

Hinc ego video iacꝫ, que sit vel fe-
licitas vel miseria in ipsis proborum
atqꝫ improborum meritis constituta.
Sed in hac ipsa fortuna populari. &c.

Hys I se well (q I) eyther
what difficulnesse, or elis what
vnselynesse is establysshed in
the desertes of good men and
of shrewes. But in thys yke
fortune of the people I se som
what of good, and somwhat of yuell. For no
wyse

Boecius. Sothly I wote wel that the lasse thynges ben alwayes ouercomen of the more myghty, and nameliche, whan the more myghty ben also vertuous as the lasse myghty ben vicious. And I wote wel what power and what helpe that vertues ben wont to yeue to hem that ben deuoute to hem. And I haue shewed ynough, as me semeth, that euery wycked man is fulle of infirmite and feblenesse. Ne of this thynge ne doubte I nothynge, ne of the strength of vertues, ne of the infirmite of vices. But I praye the that thou wolde shewe me a remedy ayenst these thynges, for it is hye tyme that I haue it.

Philo. Therfore is it that I haue ofte seyde to the that thou ne oughtest nat to leten thy corage ouercome to sorowe, ne to wepynge, ne to complaynte, whyle that thou haste any hope in thyself, by which thou mayst gete the remedy of thy thynges. But for as moche as it is necessarie to the to taste of swete thynges, and that custome of swete thynges is ofte cause of wrecchednesse to mortal folke, I wil not withdrawe the a lytel the swetenesse of rethorike, ne of the other musyke, that is to seyne, of ditees or of songes. Now synge and make the redy.

Boecius. Wherfore wolde I synge, whan I am ouercomen of wepynge and of sorowe? For certes rethorike and musyke acorden wel to prosperite, that is to seyne, that men ben glad whan they ben in prosperite, and desiren that it may alwayes endure. But he that is troubled with aduersite, and is ouercomen with sorowe, he is constrayned to wepe and to crye, and not to synge.

Philo. I wote wel that Tullius the olde man wrote ones, that the comune vsage of speche is forboden to wrecches. But I ne wil nat forbede the to synge, but I wil that thou ne synge nat in thy persone, ne that thou ne make nat thy complaynte to the peple. For thou hast ben enformed by many thynges, and by myne owne mouthe, that the corages of men ben ofte ouercomen of wrathe, whan they here the sorowes of other men. But I wil that thou shewe and discouere the causes of thy sorowe to me alone, and that thou take me for thy disciple, and for thy felawe, and for thy iuge. For certes it is a gret thynge, and a right profitable thynge, that the iuge to whom that thou shalt shewe thy cause, be enformed of his owne conscience, that he ne haue nothynge in hym that he hym repente, ne that he be nat ignorant of the thynges that he ought to knowe. For ofte tymes the shame of a man that knoweth hym self, is cause of the more shame. Wherfore I wil that thou do as I seye the, and I shal take vpon me to do away thy sorowe, and to make the able ayen to the clere sighte of thy corage.

Boecius. Certes I wil do as thou me comaundest, and I wil shewe the the causes of my sorowe, and of my wepynge. For I ne haue nothynge forgeten of the thynges that thou hast me taught, ne I ne haue nothynge forgeten of myself. But I am ouercomen of the multitude of my sorowes, and therfore I ne may nat synge. Philo. Wherfore I wil that thou shewe me the causes of thy sorowe, and of thy wepynge, and of thy complaynte, and of thy sorowe, and of thy wepynge, and of thy complaynte, and of thy sorowe, and of thy wepynge, and of thy complaynte, and

me to vnderstande it, for this myracle of this worlde troubleth me right greatly. And thā
I lyfte what smylynge sayde. Thou cleas
pest me (q she) to tell that is greatest of all
thynges, that mowen ben asked, and to the
which questiō behoueth is there aught ynough
to lauen it, as who saith, behoueth is there any
thyng to answere perfetely to thy questyon,
for the mater of it is such, that whan o doute
is determyned and cutte awaye, there waxen
other doutes wythout nombre, ryght as the
heedes of Idre the serpent waxen, the which
serpent Hercules slough: ne there ne were no
maner ne none ende, but yf a wight cōstray
ned the doutes, by a ryght lyuely and quycke
lyne of thought, that is to sayne, by bygoure
and strength of wytte. For in this mater men
were wonte to maken questyōs of the sym
plicite of the purueyaunce of god, and of the
ordre of destyne, and of sodeyne hap, & of kno
wynge of predestynacyon diuyne. And of the
liberte of frewyll, the whiche thynges thou
thy self appercyueddest wel, of what weight
they ben. But for as moch as the knowynges
of these thynges is a maner porcyon or mo
rsel to ȳ, all be it so that I haue lytel tyme
to doone it, yet neuertheleſſe I wolde enfor
cen me to shewe somwhat of it: but al though
the noyſe of thynges of dyte of muſyke delyteth
the, thou muſte ſuffren and forbearen a lytell
of thyſe delyte, whyle that I weue to the re
sons wayte by ordre. Boe. As it lyketh to the
q I so do. Philo. Tho spake she ryght as
by another begynnyng, and sayd right thus.
The engendryng of all thynges (q she) and
all the progreſſyons of mouable nature, and
what that moueth in any maner, taketh his cau
ſes, hys ordre and hys fourmes, of the ſtable
nesse of diuyne thought: And thyſe diuyne
thought that is ſet and put in the coure, that
is to sayne, in the heyght of the ſymplicyte
of god, ſtabliſheth manye maner giſes to the
thynges that ben to done, the whyche maner
whan that men loken it, in the pure clennesſe
of the diuyne intelligence, is cleaped pur
ueyaunce. But whan thyſe maner is refer
red by men, to thynges that it moueth or
diſponeth, than of olde men it was cleaped
deſtenye, the whyche thynges, yf that any
wight loketh wel in hys thouzt, the ſtrength
of that one and of that other, he ſhall lyght
ly mowe ſene, that theſe two thynges ben di
uers. For pouruеyaunce is thyſe diuyne
reaſon, that is eſtabliſhed in the ſouerayne
prynce of thynges, the whych pouruеyaunce
diſponeth all thynges. But certes deſtynye
is the diſpoſycyon and the ordynaunce cle
uynge to mouable thynges, by the whyche
diſpoſycyon the pouruеyaunce knytteth all
thynges in her ordre: For pouruеyaunce en
braſeth all thynges to heape, all though they
be dyuers, and all though they be infynite,
but deſtenye certayne departeth and ordayn
neth all thinges ſyngulerly, and deuydeth in
mouyng, in places, in formes, and in tymes,
as thus: Let the vnfoldynge of tempozall or
dynaunce aſſembled and oned in the lokynge
of the diuyne thought be cleaped pouruеyaunce
and thyſe ſame aſſemblynge and onynge de
uyded and vnfolden, lette that be called deſte
nye. And al be it so that theſe thynges ben di
uers, yet neuertheleſſe hanged that one on
that other, for why, the ordre deſtynable pro
ceedeth of the ſymplicyte of pouruеyaunce.
For ryght as a werkeman perceyueth in hys
thought, the fourme of a thynge that he woll
make, and moueth the effecte of the werke,
and leadeth that he had loked before in his
thought ſymply and preſently by corporal or
dynaunce: certes ryght so god in his puruey
aunce diſponeth ſyngulerlye and ſtably, the
thynges that be to done, but he adminiſtreth
in maners and in dyuers tymes by deſtenye,
thyſe ſame thynges that he hath diſponed,
than whether deſtenye be exerciſed eyther by
ſome diuyne ſpyrytes, ſeruauntes to the dy
uyne pouruеyaunce, or els by ſome ſoule, or
els by all nature ſeruyng to god, or els by the
celeſtyall mouynges of ſterres, or els by the
vertue of aungels, or els by dyuers ſubtyltie
of dyuels, or els by any of hem, or els by hem
all, the deſtynable ordynaunce is wouen and
accompliſhed. Certes it is open thyng that
the pouruеyaunce is an vnmouable and ſym
ple fourme of thynges to doone, and the mo
uable bonde and the tempozall ordynaunce
of thynges whych that the diuyne ſymplicite
of pouruеyaunce hath ordayned to done, that
is deſtenye. For whiche it is that all thynges
that ben put vnder deſtenye, ben certes ſubiec
tes vnto pouruеyaunce, to whiche pouruey
aunce deſtenye it ſelfe is ſubiecte and vnder,
but ſome thinges ben put vnder puruеyaunce,
that ſurmounten the ordynaunce of deſtenye:

And tho

And tho ben thylke that ſtabilye ben fyxed ayghe to the fyrſt godheed, they ſurmounten the ordre of deſtinable mouablyte. For ryght as cercles turnen aboute a ſame centre or aboute a poynte, thylke cercle that is innereſt or moſte within, he ioyneth to the ſympleſſe of the myddle, and is as it were a centre or a poynte to that other cercles, that tourné about him: and thilke that is vttereſt, compaſſed by a larger emyſpherynge, is vnfolde by larger ſpaces, in ſomoche as it is fertherest fro the myddeleſt ſympleyte of the poynte. And yf there be any thing that knyteth and feloushippeth him ſelfe to thylke myddle poynte, it is conſtrayned in to ſympleyte, that is to ſaye, in to vnmouablite, and it ceaſeth to ben ſhadde and flyte dyuerſly. Right ſo by ſemblable reaſon thylke thynge that departeth furtherest fro the fyrſte thought of god, it is vnfolden and alſo ſubmytted to greater bondes of deſtyne, and in ſo moche is the thynge more free and loce fro dignyte, as it aſketh and holdeth nerre to thylke centre of thynges, that is to ſayne, to god. And yf the thyng cleaueth to the ſtedfaſtneſſe of the thought of god, and be wythout mouynge, certes it ſurmounteth the neceſſyte of deſtenye. Than ſuche comparyſon as is ſkyllynge to vnderſtandynge, and of thynge that was engendred to thyng that is of tyme to eternyte, and of the cercle to the centre, ryght ſo is the ordre of mouable deſtyne, to the ſtable ſympleyte of pouruеyaunce.

Thylke ordynaunce moueth the heuen and the ſterres, and attempreth the elementes togyder amonge hem ſelfe, and tranſformeth hem by entrechaungeable mutacyon. And thylke ſame ordre newyth ayen all thynges growyng and fallyng adowne, by ſemblable progreſſyons of ſedes and of ſeris, that is to ſayne, male and femele: and thys ylke ordre conſtrayneth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bonde of cauſes, not able to be vnbounden: the whiche deſtinable cauſes whan they paſſen out fro the begynnynges of vnmouable puruеyaunce, it mote nedes be that they ne be not mutable, as thus: Be the thynges wel gouerned, yf that the ſympleyte dwelling in the diuyne thought, ſheweth forth the ordre of cauſes vnable to be bowed. And this ordre conſtrayneth by the propre ſtabylite the mouable thynges, or els they ſhulden flete folily. For whiche it is, that thynges ſemen confuſe and troublye to vs men, for we ne knowen not conſyder thylke ordynaunce. Neuertheleſs, the propre maner of euery thyng knowyng him to good diſponeth hem all, for there nys nothyng done for yuell, for thylke thyng that is done by wycked folke, nys not don for yuel. The which ſhewes, as I haue ſhewed full pleneuously ſeke good, but wycked errour miſturneth hem, ne the ordre comyng fro the poynte of ſouerayne good, ne enclyneth not fro hys begynnynge. But thou mayſte ſaye, what vnreſt may ben a worſe confuſyon, than that good men haue ſomtyme aduerſyte, and ſomtyme proſperyte: and ſhewes haue alſo thynges that they deſyren, and notte thynges that they hatten. Whether men lyue nowe in ſuche holyneſſe of thought, as who ſayeth, be men nowe ſo wyſe that ſuche folke as they demen to be good folke or ſhewes, that it mote nedes be, that folke be ſuche as they wenen. But in this maner doumes of mi diſcoiden, that thilke men that ſome folke demen worthy of mede, other folke demen worthy of tourment, but let vs graunt: I ſuppoſe that ſome man may well deme or knowe the good people and the badde, mayſt be than knowe and ſe thylke vnreſt attempetaunce of corage, as it hath be wonte to be ſayde of bodyes, as who ſayethe: may a man ſpeken of complections and attemprаunce of bodies, as it ne is not, as who ſayth, but it is lyke a mer mayle or a myracle to hem that ne knowen it not, why that ſwete thynges be conuenable to ſome bodyes that ben hole, and to ſome people bytter thynges be conuenable: and alſo why ſome people ben holpen wth light medecynes, and ſome people ben holpen wyth bytter medecines: but nathelеſſe tho that knowen the maner and the attemprаunce of heale and of maladie, ne merualyeth it nothyng. But what other thing ſemeth helth of corages but bounte and what other thyng ſemeth malady of corage but vices. Who is els keper of good and bonne a way of yuel, but god the gouernour and lorde of thoughtes: the whiche god, whan he hath beholden from the hygh toure of his puruеyaunce, he knoweth what is conuenable to any wight, and leaueth hem that he wote wel that is conuenable to hē. Lo, herof cometh and herof is doone this myracle of the ordre deſtynable whan god that all knoweth doth ſuch thyng of whych thyng vnknowynge folke ben aſto-

nyed.

ayed, but for to constrayne, as who sayeth, but for to comprehende and tel a fewe thynges of the dyuine depenesse, the whyche that mannes reason maye vnderstande. Thylke man that thou wenest to bene ryght iuste & ryght kepyng of equite, the contrary of that seweth to the dyuine purueyaunce that all wote. And Lucan my familyer telleth, that the victorious cause lyked to the gods, & the causes ouercome lyketh to Caton. Thanne what so euer thou maist sene that is done in this worlde vnhoped or vnknowen, certes it is the right ordre of thinges, but as to thy wicked opinion, it is a confusion. But I suppose þ some man be so wel thewed, that the dyuine iugement & the iugemẽt of mannde accorden hem togyther of him: but he is so vnstedfast of corage, that if any aduersite come to him, he wol forleten peraũenture to contynue innocence, by the whyche he ne may not withholden fortune: than the wyse dispensacion of god spareth hym, the which man aduersite myghte empayren, for þ God wil not hym to trauayle, to who þ trauayle ys not conuenable. In other man is perfyte moral vertues, and is an holy man & nygh to God, so that the purueyaunce of God wold bene, that it were a felony that he were touched with anye aduersytees, so that he woll suffre, that suche a man be wyth any bodyly malady moued. But so as sayd the philosophre þ more excellent is by me said in great that vertues haue edifyed the body of the holy man, & ofte tyme it betydeth, that þ sume of thynges that bene to done is taken to goodnesse to good folke, for þ the malice haboũdaunt of shrewes shulde bene abated. And god weneth and departeth to other folke prosperites and aduersitees medled to heape, after the qualyte of her corages, and remoueth some folke by aduersitees, for they ne shulde not waxen proude by longe welefulnes. And other folke he suffreth to be trauayled wyth harde thinges, for that they shulde enforcen the vertues of corage, by the exercitacio of vsage of pacience. And other folke bereden more than they oughten, the whyche they myghten wel beaten, and some dispyse that they mowe not beare, and thylke folke God leadeth in to experience of hem selfe by alyte and sorowfull thynges. And manye other folke haue bought honourable renome of this worlde, by the price of glorioufe deth And some men that ne mowe not bene ouercomen by tourment haue yeuen ensample to other folke, that vertue maye not bene ouercomen by aduersitees. And of all these thynges there nys no dout, that they ne ben done rightfully and ordaynly, to the parfite good of hem, to whom we sene these thynges betyde. For certes that aduersitee cometh sõtyme to shrewes, and somtyme that they deseruen, it cometh of these forsayd causes. And of sorowful thinges that betiden to shrewes certes no mã ne wondreth, for all men wene that they haue deserued it, & that they bene of wicked merite. Of which shrewes the turmente agasteth somtyme other to done felonyes: and somtyme it amendethe hem that suffreth the tourmentes. And the prosperyte that is yeuẽ to shrewes, sheweth a great argumente to good peple, what thynge they shulde demen of thylke welfulnesse, whyche prosperite mẽ sene ofte serue to shrewes: In whyche thinge I trow that God dispenseth for parauenture the nature of some mã is so ouerthrowyng so yuell and so vncouenable, þ the nedy pouerte, of hys houshold myght rather agreue hym to done felonyes, and to the maladye of hym God putteth remedy to yeuen hym richesse. And some other man beholdeth hys cõscience defouled wyth synnes and maketh cõparyson of thys fortune and of hym selfe, and dredethe parauenture that the blysfulnesse, of whyche the vsage is vnfull to hym, that the lesynge of thylke blysfulnesse ne be not sorowfull to hym, & therfore he wolde chaunge hys maners: and for he dredeth to lese hys fortune, he forleteth the hys wyckednesse. To other folkes welfulnesse is yeuen vnworthyly, the whyche ouerthroweth hem in to destructiõ that they han deserued, and to some other folke is yeuẽ power to punischẽ, for that it shal be cause of contynuacyon, and exercysynge to good folkes, and cause of turmẽt to shrewes. For so as there nys none alyaunce bitwene good folkes and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen not accorden amonge hem selfe: & why not? For þ shrewes discorden of hem selfe by her vices the which vices al to renden her cõsciences, and done oft tyme the thinges, which thynges whan they haue doone hem, they deme that tho thynges ne shuld not haue be

And the ben thylke that stabilye ben fyxed eyghe to the fyxte godhed, they surmounten the ordre of destinable mouablyte. For ryght as cercles turnen aboute a same centre or aboute a poynte, thylke cercle that is innerest as nesse within, he ioyneth to ꝑ symplesse of ꝑ myddle, & is as it were a centre or a poynte to that other cercles, that tourné about him: and thilke that is vtterest, compassed by a larger envyronmynge, is vnfolde by larger spaces, in somoche as it is fertherest fro the myddelest symplycite of the poynte. And yf there be any thing that knytteth and feloushippeth him selfe to thylke myddle poynte, it is constrayned in to symplycite, that is to saye, in to vnmouablite, and it cesseth to ben shadde & flyte dyuersly. Right so by semblable reason thylke thynge that departeth furtherest fro the fyrste thought of god, it is vnfolden and also submytted to greater bondes of destyne, and in so moche is the thynge more free and loce fro dignyte, as it asketh & holdeth nerre to thylke centre of thynges, that is to sayne, to god. And yf the thyng cleaueth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of god, and be without mouynge, certes it surmounteth the necessyte of destenye. Than suche comparyson as is thylynge to vnderstandynge, and of thynge that was engendred to thyng that is of tyme to eternyte, and of the cercle to the centre, ryght so is the ordre of mouable destyne, to the stable symplycite of pouruey aunce.

Thylke ordynaunce moueth the heuen and the sterres, and attempreth the elementes togyder amonge hem selfe, and transformeth hem by entrechaungeable mutacyon. And thylke same ordre newyth ayen all thynges growyng and fallyng adowne, by semblable progressyons of sedes and of kynde, that is to sayne, male and femele: and thys ylke ordre constrayneth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bonde of causes, not able to be vnbounden: the whiche destinable causes whan they passen out fro the begynnynges of vnmouable purueyaunce, it mote nedes be that they ne be not mutable, as thus: Be the thynges wel gouerned, yf that ꝑ symplicite dwelling in the diuyne thought, sheweth forth the ordre of causes vnable to be bowed. And this ordre constrayneth by the propre stabylite the mouable thynges, or els they shulden flete folily. For whiche it is, that thynges semen confuse and troubleye to vs men, for we ne mowen not consyder thylke ordynaunce. Neuertheles, the propre maner of euery thing, dressyng him to good disponeth hem all, for there nys nothyng done for yuel, for thylke thyng that is done by wycked folke, nys not don for yuel. The which shewes, as I haue shewed ful pleynerously sene good, but wycked errour misturneth hem, ne the ordre comyng fro the poynte of soueraine good, ne encyneth not fro hys begynnynge. But thou mayste saye, what vnkest may ben a worse confusyon, than that good men haue somtyme aduersyte, and somtyme prosperyte: and shrewes haue now also thynges that they desyren, and nowe thynges that they haten. Wether men lyue nowe in suche holynesse of thought, as who sayth, be men nowe so wyse, that suche folke as they demen to be good folke or shrewes, that it mote nedes be, that folke be suche as they wenen. But in this maner domes of men discorden, that thilke men that some folke demen worthy of mede, other folke demen hem worthy of tourment, but let vs graunt: I suppose that some man may well deme or knowe the good people and the badde, mayst he than knowe and se thylke vnkest attemperaunce of corage, as it hath be wonte to be sayde of bodyes, as who sayth: may a man speken of complexions and attemperaunce of bodies, or it ne is not, as who sayth, but it is lyke a merueyle or a myracle to hem that ne knowen it not, why that swete thynges be conuenable to some bodyes that ben hole, and to some people bytter thynges be conuenable: & also why some people ben holpen vp light medecynes, and some people ben holpen with bytter medecynes: but natheles tho that knowen the maner & the attemperaunce of heale & of maladie, ne merueylyeth it nothyng. But what other thing semeth helth of corages but bounte: & what other thyng semeth maladi of corage but vices. Who is els kepere of good & driuere a way of yuel, but god the gouernour & leder of thoughtes: the whiche god, whan he hath beholden from the hygh toure of his purueyaunce, he knoweth what is conuenable to any wight, & leadeth hem that he wote wel that is conuenable to hē. Lo, herof cometh & herof is doone this myracle of the ordre destynable whan god that all knoweth doth such thyng, of whych thyng vnknowynge folke ben astonyed,

ayed, but for to constrayne, as who sayeth, but for to comprehende and tel a fewe thynges of the dyuine depenesse, the whyche that mannes reason maye vnderstande. Thylke man that thou weenest to bene ryght iuste & ryght kepyng of equite, the contrary of that semeth to the dyuine purueyaunce that all wote. And Lucan my familyer telleth, that the victorious cause lyked to the gods, & the causes ouercome lyketh to Caton. Thanne what so euer thou maist sene that is done in this worlde vnhoped or els vnknowen, certes it is the right ordre of thinges, but as to thy wicked opinion, it is a confusion. But I suppose þ some man be so wel thewed, that the dyuine iugement & the iugemẽt of mankynde accorden hem togyther of him: but he is so vnstedfast of corage, that if any aduersite come to him, he wol forleten peraũture to contynue innocence, by the whyche he ne may not withholden fortune: than the wyse dispensacion of god spareth hym, the which man aduersite myghte empayren, for þ God wil not hym to trauayle, to whõ þ trauayle nys not conuenable. An other man is perfyte in al vertues, and is an holy man & nygh to God, so that the purueyaunce of God wold deme, that it were a felony that he were touched with anye aduersytees, so that he woll suffre, that suche a man be wyth any bodyly malady moued. But so as sayd the philosophre þ more excellent is by me said in great that vertues haue edifyed the body of the holy man, & otte tyme it betydeth, that þ sũme of thynges that bene to done is taken to gouerne to good folke, for þ the malice haboũdaunt of shrewes shulde bene abated. And god yeueth and departeth to other folke prosperites and aduersitees medled to heape, after the qualyte of her corages, and remorde the some folke by aduersitees, for they ne shulde not waxen proude by longe welefulnes. And other folke he suffreth to be trauayled wyth harde thinges, for that they shulde confermen the vertues of corage, by the exercitacõ of vsage of patience. And other folke bereden more than they oughten, the whyche they myghten wel bearen, and some dispyse that they mowe not beare, and thylke folke God leadeth in to experience of hem selfe by aspre and sorowfull thynges. And manye other folke haue bought honourable renome of this worlde, by the price of glorioufe deth And some men that ne mowe not bene ouercomen by tourment haue yeuen ensample to other folke, that vertue maye not bene ouercomen by aduersitees. And of all these thynges there nys no dout, that they ne ben done rightfully and ordaynly, to the parfite good of hem, to whom we sene these thynges betyde. For certes that aduersities cometh sõtyme to shrewes, and somtyme that they despyten, it cometh of these forsayd causes. And of sorowful thynges that betiden to shrewes certes no mã ne wondreth, for all men wene that they haue deserued it, & that they bene of wicked merite. Of which shrewes the turmente agasteth somtyme other to done felonyes: and somtyme it amendethe hem that suffreth the tourmentes. And the prosperyte that is yeuẽ to shrewes, sheweth a great argumente to good peple, what thynge they shulde demen of thylke welfulnesse, whyche prosperite mẽ sene ofte serue to shrewes: In whyche thinge I trow that God dispenseth for parauenture the nature of some mã is so ouerthrowyng to yuell and so vnconuenable, þ the nedy pouerte, of hys houlholde myght rather agreue hym to done felonyes, and to the maladye of hym God putteth remedy to yeuen hym richelle. And some other man beholdeth hys cõscience defouled wyth synnes and maketh cõparyson of thys fortune and of hym selfe, and dredethe parauenture that the blyfulnesse, of whyche the vsage is ioyfull to hym, that the leesynge of thylke blyfulnesse ne be not sorowfull to hym, & therfore he wolde chaunge hys maners: and for he dredeth to lese hys fortune, he forleteth the hys wyckednesse. To other folkes welfulnesse is yeuen vnworthyly, the whyche ouerthroweth hem in to destructiõ that they han deserued, and to some other folke is yeuẽ power to punisshẽ, for that it shal be cause of contynuacyon, and exercysynge to good folkes, and cause of turmẽt to shrewes. For so as there nys none alyaunce betwene good folkes and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen not accorden amonge hem selfe: & why not: For þ shrewes discorden of hem selfe by her vices the which vices al to renden her cõsciences, and done oft tyme the thinges, which thynges whan they haue doone hem, they deme that the thynges ne shuld not haue be

done, for whyche thynge the souerayne purueyaunce hath maked ofte tyme myracle: so that shrewes haue maked shrewes to bene good men. For whā that some shrewes sene that they suffre wrōgfully felonyes of other shrewes, they waxen eschauffed in to hate of hem that annoyed hem, and retourné to the fruite of vertue. Than they studyen to be vnlike to hem that they haue hated. Certes onely is thys the dyuyne myght, to the whyche myght yuels bene than good, whan it vseth the yuels couenably, and drawyth out the effecte of any good, as who sayeth, that yuell is good onely to the myghte of God, for the might of god ordeyneth thylke yuel to good For one ordre embraceth all thynges, so that what wyghte departeth from the reason of thylke ordre that is assygned to hym, algates yet he slydeth in to another ordre, so that nothyng is lefull to foly in the realme of dyuyne purueyaunce, as who sayeth, nothyng is wythout ordynaunce in the realme of dyuyne pourueaunce, syth that the ryght strōg God gouerneth all thynges in thys worlde for it is not lefful for men to comprehende by wyt ne vnfolden by worde all the subtyl ordynaunce and the dysposycyon of the diuine entent, for only it ought to suffyse to haue lerned that God hym selfe, maker of al natures ordayneth all thynges to good, whyle that he hasteth to wythholde the thinges that he hath maked in to his semblaunce, that is to say, for to wythholden þ thinges in to good for he hym selfe is good. He chaseth out al yuels fro the bounde of hys comynaltyes, by þ ordre of the necessyte destynable: for which it folowyth, þ yf thou loke the purueyaunce ordeynynge the thinges that men wenen be outragyous or aboundaunt in erthes, thou shalte not sene in no place nothynge of yuell. But I se nowe that thou art charged wyth the weyght of the questyon, and werry with length of my reason, and that thou abydeste some swetenes of song, take thā this drauȝt and whan thou art wel refreshed and refect thou shalt be more stedfast to flye in to hyger questyous or thynges.

Si vis celsi iura tonantis, Plura soleris cernere mente, Aspice summi culmina celi.

If thou wyse wolte demen in thy pure thought, þ rightes or the lawes of the hye thonder, that is to sayne of God, loke thou and beholde the heyghtes of the souerayne heuen: There kepen the sterres by rightful alyaūce of thinges her olde peace: The sūne ynoued by his roody fyre, ne dystourbeth not the colde circle of the mone ne the sterre ycleped the Beer that enclyneth his rauyshing courses, abouten the souerayne heyght of thys worlde. Ne the same sterre Thisa nys neuer mo wasshen in the depe westren see, ne coueiteth not to dyen his flambes in the see of the Occian although it se other sterres yploūged in the see: And Hesperus the sterre boodeth and telleth alway the late nyghtes: and Lucifer the sterre bringeth agayne the clere daye. And thus maketh loue enterchaūgeable, þ perdurable courses, and thus is discordable batayle yput out of the coūtrey of the sterres. This accordaunce attempreth by cuyuilike maners the elementes, that the moyst thynges stryuyng wyth the drye thinges, yeuen place by stoundes: and that the colde thinges ioynen hem by tarth to the hote thynges, and that the lyght fyre aryseth in to heyghte, and the heuy erthes aualen by her weyghtes: by the same causes the flourye yere yeldeth swete smelles in the fryste somer season warming and the hote somer dryeth the cornes, and Autumpne cometh ayen heuye of apples, and the fleeyng rayne bedeweth the wynter, this attemperaunce nourisheth and bringeth forth al thynges that bereth lyfe in thys worlde, and thylke same attemperaunce rauyshyng hydeth, benymeth, and drencheth vnder the laste deathe all thynges yborne. Amonges these thynges sytteth the hyghe maker kyng and lorde, welle and begynnyng, law and wyse nige, to done equyte, and gouerneth and enclyneth the bridles of thinges: And tho thinges that he sterreth to gone by mouynge, he wythdraweth and arresteth, and affermeth the mouable or wandrynge thynges. For yf that he ne called not ayen the ryght gonge of thinges. And if that he ne cōstreyned hem nat ertlones in to roundnesses enclyned, the thynges þ bene nowe cōtynued by stable ordynaunce, they shulde departen frō her welle that is to sayne from her begynnynge and fallen, that is to sayne, routnen into naught.

Thys

This is the cõmune loue to al thynges: all thynges aske to bene holden by the fyne of good, for els ne myghten they not laste, yf they ne come not eftesones ayen by loue retourned to the cause that hath yeue hem being, that is to sayne God.

Jā ne igitur vides quid hec omnia q dirimus eqsequantur? Quid nam inquit? Omnem inquit. &c.

Seest thou not than, what thing followeth al the thinges that J haue sayd Boece. what thynge (quod J) P. Certes (quod she) all veterly, that fortune is good Boe. And howe maye that be (q J) Howe vnderstande (q she) So as al fortune, whether so it be ioyful fortune or aspre fortune, is yeue eyther bycause of guerdonyng, or els of exercisyng of good folkes, or els bycause to punysshen, or els chastisen shrewes: Than is all fortune good, the whyche fortune is certayn, that it be eyther ryghtful, or els profytable. Boe. Forsoth this is a ful verry reason (q J). And yf J consyder the pourueyaunce & the destyne that thou taughtest me alytle here beforne, thys sentence is sustayned by stedfaste reasons. But yf it lyke vnto the, let vs nombren hem among thylke thynges, of which thou saydest a litle here beforne, that they ne were not able to bene weyed to the people. P. why so q she. B. For that the cõmune worde of men (q J) misuseth this maner speach of fortune, and sayne ofte tymes, that the fortune of some wyght is wicked. Philoso. wylte thou than (quod she) that J approche a lytle to the wordes of the people so that it seme not to hem that J be not ouer much departed, as fro the vsage of mākinde Boece. As thou wolte (quod J). Philo. weenest them not (quod she) that all thynge that profyteth is good Boece yes (quod J) Phi. Certes all thynge that exerceth or corrigeth & profyteth. Boece. J confesse wel (quod J) Philoso. Than it is good (quod she). Boece. why not (quod J). Philoso. But thys is the fortune (quod she) of hem that eyther be put in vertue, & batayen ayenst aspre thynges, or els of hem that enclynen and declinen fro vyces, and taken the waye of vertue. Boece. Thys ne may J not denye (quod J). Philo. But what sayest thou of the merye fortune that is yeuen to good people in guerdon, demeth ought the people that it be wycked. B. Naye forsoth (quod J) but they demen as it is sothe, that it is ryght good. Philo. what sayest thou of the other fortune (q she) that all thoughe that it be aspre and restrayneth the shrewes by ryghtfull tourment, weneth aught the people that it be good. Boe. Nay (q J) but the people demeth that is moofte wretched of all thynges ỹ maye be thought Philoso. ware now and loke wel (quod she) leste we in folowyng the opinion of the people, haue confessed and cõcluded thing which that is vnable to bene weyed to the people. Boece. what is that (quod J). Philoso. Certes (quod she) it followeth or cometh of thinges that bene graũted, that al fortune what so euer it be, of hem that bene eyther in possession of vertue, or in the encreasse of vertue, or elles in the purchasynge of vertue, that the ylke fortune is good, and that all fortune is right wicked to hem that dwellen in shrewednesse, as who sayeth, and thus weeneth not the people. Boece. That is sothe (q J) Al be it so that no man dare confesse it, ne knowe it. Philoso. why so (quod she). For eyght as the stronge man ne semeth not to a bashen or disdayne, as oftime as he beateth the noyse of baytayle: Ne also it semeth not to the wyse man to beaten it greuously, as oft as he is ledde in to stryfe of fortune. For bothe to that one man and eke to that other, thylke dyffyculte is the matter to that one manne of encreasse of his glorvouse renome, and to that other man to conserue hys sapyence, that is to sayn, to the asprenesse of hys estate, forthersore is it called vertue for that it sustayneth & enforceth by hys strengthes, so that it nys not ouercomen by aduersyties Ne certes thou that art put in encreasse or in the heyghte of vertue, ne haste not comen to sterken wyth deyces, and for to walken in bodyly luste. Thou sowest or planted a full eygre batayle in thy corage ayenst enerye fortune: For that the sorowfull fortune cõfound the not, ne that the merry fortune ne corrũpe the not, occupye the meane by stedfast stregthes. For all that euer is vnder the meane or al that ouerpasseth the meane, dyspyseth

vnclenesse, as who sayeth, it is vicious, & ne hath no mede of hys trauayle, for it is set in your hande, as who sayth, it lyeth in your power what fortune you is leuest, that is to saye good or yuel, for al fortune that semeth sharpe or alyte, if it ne be exercise not þ good folke, ne chastyle the wycked folke, it punysheth.

Bella bis binis operatus annis,
Vltor atrides phrigicrumis. &c.

The worthy atrides, that is to sayne Agamemnon, þ wroȝt and contynued the batayle by ten yeare, recouerd & purged in worchynge, by the distruction of Troye, the losse of ladies of marȝage in hys brother, that is to saye, that Agamemnon wan ayen Helayne, that was Menelaus wyfe, hys brother. In the meane whyle that thilke Agamemnon delyuered to yeuen sayles to the grekes nauy, and broughte ayen the wyndes by blonde: He unclothed hym of pyte of father, and the sorye preest yeueth in sacrifyeng, the wretched cuttynge of the throte of the doughter, that is to say that Agamenon let cutte the throte of hys doughter by the preest, to maken alliaunce wyth his goddes, & for to haue wynd wyth whiche he myght wenden to Troye. Itacus, that is to saye blynde, bewepte hys felowes ploute, the which felowes the feers Polyphemus lyggynge in hys greate caue, had frotten and deuyrt in his empty wombe But nathelesse Polyphemus woode for hys blynde vysage yelde to Ulixes ioye, by hys sotouful teeres, that is to saye, that Ulixes smote out the eye of Polyphemus that stode in the forheed, for whyche Ulixes had ioye, whan he sawe Polyphemus weppynge and blynde. Hercules is crieblable for hys harde trauayle, he daunted the proude Centaurus halfe horse halfe man, & berafte the dyspoylyng fro the cruel lyon, þ is to say, he slough þ lyon, & berafte hym hys skynne. He smote the bryddes þ hyght Arpyes with certaine arowes. He rauyshed apples fro the wakyng dragon: and his hande was the more heauy for the golden metal. He drough Cerberus the hounde of hell by the triple chaynes. He ouertromer, as it is said, hath put an vnmeete laȝde fodder to his cruel horse, that is to say Hercules slough Dyomedes, and made hys horse to freten him: & he Hercules slough Idra the serpente, and dreynt the venym. And Achileus the stoud defouled in his forheed, dreynt his shamfast vysage in his stronde that is to say, that Achileus coulde transfigure hym selfe into dyuers lykenesse, & as he taught with Hercules, at last he turned hem into a bull, & Hercules brake one of his hornes: and he for shame hyd hem in his ryuer. And ouer that he Hercules cast adowne Antheus the graunte in the strondes of Lybye. And Cacus appeysed the wrathes of Euander, that is to say that Hercules slough the monstre Cacus, & appeysed with that death the wraeth of Euander. And the brystled bore marked with bones the shulders of Hercules, the which sholders the bye cercle of heuē shulde thrust. And þ last of his labours was þ he sustayned the heauen vpon his nerke in bowed, & he deserued rystones the heuē to be the last ende of trauayle. Goth nowe then ye strouge men there as the great ensample is deth you. O nyce me why make ye your bakes, as who saith: o ye slowe & delicate men why se ye aduersitees, & ne fyghte not ayenst hem by vertue, to wynne þ mede of heuē for the mede ouercomē, peueth þ sterres, þ is to sayne, that whan that erthly lust is ouercomen, a man is makd worthye to the heuen.

Here endeth the fourth boke of Boece, & foloweth the fyfth.

Dirierat, orationisq; cursum ad alia quedam tractanda atq; expedienda vertebat. B. Tum ego, recta quidem inq;. &c.

She had sayd & turned the course of her reason to some other tonges to be treated & to be sped. B. Thā sayd I, certes rightfull is thine amonestyng & ful digne by auctorite. But that thou saidest whylom, that the question of the diuyne purueyaūce, is enlaced wyth manye other questions, I vnderstande well and proue it by the same thyng But I aske, yf that thou wenest that hap be any thynge in anye wayes, & yf thou wenest that

that hap be any thyng, what is it? P. Than (q she) I haste me to yelden and alloyen to the det of my behest, and to shewē and open the way, by which way thou mayst come ayen to thy countrey: but al be it so þ the thinges whych that thou askest, bene ryght profytable to knowe, yet bene they dyuers, somwhat fro the path of my purpose and it is to dout, that thou ne be maked werye by mysse wayes, so that thou ne mayste not suffyse to measure the ryght way. B. Ne dout the ther of nothyng (quod I). For to knowen thylke thynges togyther, in the whiche thynges I delyte me greatly, þ shall bene to me in stede of rest, syth it nys not to douten of the thynges folowynge, whan euerye thynge of thy disputacion shall haue bene stedfaste to me, by vndoutous fayth. P. Than (sayde she) that maner wol I done to the, and began to speaken ryght thus. Certes (q she) yf anye wyght deme, þ hap in thys maner, that is to sayn, that hap is betyding ybrought forth by folysh mouynge, & by no knyttyng of causes, I conferme that hap nys ryght naught in no wyse, and I deme all vtterly, that hap nys ne dwelleth but a voyce, as who sayeth but an ydell worde, wythout any signification of thynge cōmytted to that voyce. For what place myght bene lefte or dwellyng in folye & to disordinaunce, syth that God leadeth and constrayneth al thynges by ordre, for this sentence is very soth, that nothynge hath his beyng of naught, to the which sentence, none of these olde folke ne wythsayde neuer, al be it so that they ne vnderstande it not, by God prince & begynner of worksynge but they casten, as a maner foundemente of subiecte material, that is to sayne, of the nature of all reason. And yf that any thynge is waten or comē of no causes thā shal it seme þ thylke thing is comen or woxen of naught But yf thys ne maye not be done, than is it not possible that hap be any such thyng, as I haue definyshed a lytle here beforne. Boece. How shal it than be (q I) nys there than no thyng that by ryght may bene cleped eyther hap or els aduenture or fortune: or is there aught, albeit so that it is hyd fro the people to which thynge these wordes bene conuenable? P. Wyne Aristotle (q she) in the boke of hys phisyke, definyseth thys thynge by good reason, & nigh to the soth. B. In which maner (q I)? P. As ofte (q she) as men done any thynge for grace of any other thynge, & another thynge than thylke thyng that men entenden to done betideth by some causes, it is ycleped hap, right as a man dalfe the erth bycause of tyllynge of the felde, and founde there a gobet of golde bedolven, than wenē folke that it is befal by fortunous betydyng. But forsoth it nys not of nought, for it hath his propre causes, of whych causes þ course vnforeseen and vnware, semeth to haue maken hap. For if the tyller of the felde ne dolue not in the erth, and yf the hyder of the golde ne had hyd the golde in that place, the golde ne had not bene founde. These beue than the causes of the abredgynge of fortuit hap, the whiche abredgyng of fortuit hap cometh of causes of encountrynge and flowyng togyther to hem selfe, and not by the entencion of the doer. For neyther the hyder of the golde, ne the deluer of the felde, ne vnderstoden not that the golde shulde haue bene founde. But as I sayd, it betyde and cāne togyther, that he dalfe there as þ other had hydde the gold Nowe may I thus definish hap. Hap is an vnware betydynge of causes, assembled in thynges that ben done for some other thyng But thilke order procedinge by vnescheable betyding togider, which þ descendeth fro the wel of purueyaunce, þ ordeyneth al thinges in her places and in her tymes maketh, that the causes rennen and assemblen togither.

Rupis Achemence scopulis vbi ver sa sequentum,
Pectoribus fugit spicula. &c,

TIgris & Eufrates resolue and springē of o well, in þ cragges of the roch of the countrey of Achemenee, there as the fleynge batayls tiren her dartes returning, in þ brestes of hem þ folowē him. And sone after the same ryuers Tigris & Eufrates, vnioynē and departen her waters, and yf they comen togyther, & ben assembled and cleped togyther into o course, thā motē thilke thinges fleten togyther, which that þ water of the entrechaungyng flood bryngeth. The shippes & the stockes araced with the floud motē assēblen, & the waters ymedled, wrappethe or implyeth manye fortuneil happes

or maners, the whyche wandrynge happes natheleſſe, thylke declinynge lowneſſe of the earth and the flowynge ordre of the flydyng water gouerneth. Right ſo fortune that ſemeth, as it ſtereth wyth ſtaked or vngouerned bydeis, it ſuffereth bydies, þ is to ſayne to bene gouerned, and palleth by thylke lawe that is to ſayne, by the dyuine ordinaunce.

Animaduerto inq̃, idq̃ vti tu dicis ita eſſe, conſencio. Sed in hac perexiguum. ꝛc.

Thys underſtãde I wel (quod I) and I accorde me that it is ryghte as þ ſayſt. But I aſke yf ther be any lyberte of free wyl in thys ordre of cauſes, that cleuen thus togyther in hem ſelfe, or els I wolde wyten, yf that the deſtinal cheyne cõſtrayneth the mouynge of the courages of men. Philo. Yes (quod he) there is lyberte of frewyll, ne there was neuer no nature of reaſon, that it ne had lyberte or frewyll. For euery thynge that may naturally vſe reaſon, it hath dome by which it deſcerneth and demeth euery thyng. Than knoweth it by it ſelfe thynges that ben to flyen, and thynges that bene to deſiren, and thilke thynge that any wyght demeth to bene deſyred, that aſkethe or deſyreth he, and flyeth the lyke thynge that he troweth be to flyen. Wherfore in all thynges that reaſon is, in hym alſo is lyberte of wyllynge and of nylling but I ne ordeyne nat, as who ſayeth, I ne graunt nat, the this liberte be euen lyke in al thynges. For why in the ſoueraynes deuynes ſubſtaunces, that is to ſayne, in ſpirites iugement is more clere and wyll not corrumpe and myghtye redye to ſpeden thynges that bene deſyred. But the ſoules of men moten nedes ben more fre, whan they loken hem in the ſpeculacyon or lokynge of the dyuyne thought, and laſſe fre whan they flyden in to the bodyes, and yet laſſe fre whan they bene gathered togyther and cõprehended in erthly membres, but the laſte ſeruage, is whan that they bene yeuen to vices, and haue yfal from the poſſeſſion of her proper reaſon. For after that they haue caſt awaye her eyen fro the lyghte of the ſouerayne ſothfaſtneſſe, to lowe thynges and darke, anone they darken by the cloude of ignoraunce, and be troubled by felonous talentes, to the which talentes whan they approchen and aſſenten, they hepen and encreaſen, the ſeruage wyche they haue ioyned to hem ſelfe. And in this maner they ben caytyues fro her proper lyberte, the wyche thyng natheleſſe the lokyng of the dyuyne pourueyãnce ſeeth, that al thynges beholdeth and ſeeth fro eterne, and ordeyneth hem euerych in her merytes, as they ben predeſtinate, and it is ſayd in grete, that al thynges he ſeeth, and al thynges he heareth.

Puro clarum lumine phebum Hel liſtut canit oris homerus. ꝛc.

Homer wyth the honye mouthe þ is to ſayn, Homer with the ſwete dities ſyngeth, that the ſunne is clere by pure lyght. Natheles yet ne maye it not by þ infirme lyght of hys beames, breken or perſen the inward entrayles of the earth, or els of the ſee. So ne ſeeth not God maker of the great worlde to hym that loketh al thynges from an hyghe ne vnderſtandeth nothinges by heuynneſſe of erth, ne þ nyght ne withſtandeth nat to hym by the blacke cloudes, thylke God ſeeth in a ſtroke of thought all thynges that bene, were, or ſhul come: and thylke God, for he loketh and ſeeth al thinges alone, thou mayſt ſayne that he is the very ſunne.

Tum ego en inq̃ difficiliore rurſus ambiguitate confundor. ꝛc.

Than ſayde I thus, nowe am I cõfounded by a more harde doute than I was. Philoſo. what doute is that (quod he) for certes I conceyte by ſuche thinges thou art troubled. It ſemeth (quod I) to repugnen and to contrarye greatlye, that God knoweth before all thynges, and that there is any fredom or lyberte, for yf ſo be that God loketh al thynges before, ne God ne may not bene deceyued in no maner. Thã mote it nedes be þ all thynges the which that the purueyaunce of God hath ſene before to come, for whych if that God knoweth before, not onely þ werkes of men but alſo her counſayles and her

wylles

wylles, than ne shall ther be no libertie of ar
bytre, ne certes, there ne maye be none other
dede, ne no wyll, but thylke whiche that the
dayne purueyaunce that ne may not be dis-
ceyued, hath sealed beforne, for yf that they
myghten wrythen away in other maner thā
they ben purueyed, than ne shoulde there be
no stedfaste prescience of thynge to comen,
but rather an vncertaine opinion: the which
thyng to trowen of god, I deme it felonye &
vnlefull. Ne I ne proue nat thylke same rea
son, as who sayeth, I ne alowe not, or I ne
prayse not thylke same reason, by whiche ꝑ
some men wenen that they mowe assoyen
and vnknytten the knotte of this questyon.

For certes they seyn, that thyng nis not to
comen, for that the purueyaunce of god hath
seen beforne that it is to comen, but rather ꝑ
contrary, and that is this, that for that the
thynges is to comen, that therfore ne maye
it not ben hyd from the purueyaunce of god
And in this maner this necessitie sydeth ayē
into the contrarye partye, ne it ne behoueth
not nedes, that thinges betyden that bene p
purueyed, but it behoueth nedes, that thyn-
ges that bene to comen ben ypurueyed, but
as it were ytrauayled, as who sayth ꝑ thilk
answer procedeth ryght as though men tra
uayleden or weren busye to enquyren, the
which thyng is cause of the which thinges.
Is whether the prescience is cause of the ne
cessitie of thynges to comen, or els that ꝑ ne
cessitie of thynges to comen, is cause of the
purueyaunce. But I ne enforce me not now
to shewen it ꝑ the betydyng of thinges ywis
beforne is necessary, how so or in what ma
ner, that the ordre of causes hath it selfe, al
though that it ne seme not that the prescience
bryng in necessitie of betydynge, to thynges
to comen. For certes yf that any wyght syt
teth, it behoueth by necessitie that the opinio
be soth of him that conjecteth that he sytteth
and ayenwarde also is it of the cōtrary, for
yf the opynyō be soth of any wyght for that
he sytteth, it behoueth by necessitie that he
syt. Than is here necessitie in that one and in
that other: for in that one is necessitie of syt
tynge, and certes in that other is necessitye
of soth. But therfore ne sytteth not a wyght
for that the opynyon of the sittynge is soth
but the opynion is rather sothe, for that a
wyght sytteth beforne. And thus although
that the cause of the sothe cōmeth of that o-
ther syde, as who sayeth, that although the
cause of soth commeth of the syttynge, and
not of the true opynion, algates yet is there
a commune necessitie in that one and in that
other. Thus sewyth it, that I may make sē
blable skylles of the purueyaunce of God, &
of thynges to comen. For although that for
that thynges bene to comen, therfore bene
they purueyed, and not certes, for they bene
purueyed, therfore ne betyde they not, nathe
lesse it behoueth by necessitie, that eyther the
thynges to comen bene ypurueyed of god or
els that the thynges that bene purueyed of
god betyden. And this thynges onely suffy
seth ynough to destroien the fredome of our
arbytre, that is to saye, of our fre wyll. But
certes nowe shewyth it well howe ferre fro
the soth, and how vp sodowne is this thing
that we seme that the betydyng of temporal
thynges is cause of the eterne prescience.

But for to wenen that God purueyeth the
thynges to comen: what other thynge is it
but for to wene, that thylke thynges that be
tyde whylom, ben causes of thylke soueraine
purueyaunce ꝑ is in God. And hereto adde
I yet this thynges, that ryght as whan ꝑ
I wote that a thyng is, behoueth by necessi
tie that thylke selfe thyng be, and eke whan
I haue knowen that any thyng shal betyde
so behoueth it by necessitie that thylke same
thynges betyde. So folowyth it than, that
the betydyng of the thynges wyll beforne,
ne may not be eschued, and at the last, if that
any wyght wene a thyng to ben otherwyse
than it is, it nys not only vnscience, but it is
disceyuable opynyon, full dyuers and farre
fro the soth of science. wherfore yf any thing
be so to comen, that the betydyng of it ne be
not certayne ne necessarye, who may weten
beforne that thylke thynge is to comen. For
ryght as science ne may not be medled with
falsenesse, as who sayeth, that yf I wote a
thyng, it ne may not be false that I ne wote
it, ryght so thylke thynge that is conceyued
by scyence, ne maye not be none otherwyse
than as it is conceyued, for that is the cause
why that science wanteth lesynge, as who
sayth, why that wetyng ne receyueth not le
synge of that it wote, for it behoueth by ne-
cessitie, that euery thyng be ryght, as science
comprehendeth it to be.

what shall I than sayne, in whyche maner knoweth god beforne al ꝑ thynges to comē yf they ne be not certayne, for yf ꝑ he deame that they ben to comen vneschuably, and so maye be that it is possyble, ꝑ they ne shullen not comen, god is disceyued, but not only to trowen ꝑ god is disceyued, but for to speake it with mouth, it is a felonous synne. But if that god wot, that ryght so as thynges ben to comen, so shullē they comē: so that he woot egally, as who sayth indifferently, that thinges maye be done, or els not ydone. what is thylke prescience that ne comprehendeth no certayne thyng ne stable, or els what difference is there betwen: the prescience of thylke lape worthy deuyning of Tirelie deuynour that sayd: All that I saye quod he eyther it shalbe, or els it ne shall not be, or elles howe moche is worthe the deuyne prescience more than the opynion of mankynde, yf so be that it demeth the thynges vncertayne, as men done. Of the which domes of men, the betyding nys not certayne. But yf so be, that non vncertayne thynges ne may ben in him that is ryght certayne well of all thynges, than is the betyding certayne of thylke thynges which that he hath wyst be forne fyrmely to comen, for whyche it folowyth that the fredome of the counsayles, and of the werkes of mankynde nys none, syth that the thought of God that seeth all thynges without errour of falsenesse byndeth and constrayneth hem to a betyding by necessitie. And yf this thyng be ones ygraunted and receyued, this is to sayne, ꝑ there nys no fre wyl: than beweth it well how great destructiō and how great domages there folowen of thynges of mankynde, for in ydle ben there than purposed ꝑ behyght, medes to good folke, and paynes to bad folke, syth that no mouyng of free corage voluntarye, ne hath not deserued hem, that is to sayne, neither mede ne payne. And it shulde seme than that thylke thynge is alderworst, whyche that is now demed for aldermooste iust and most rightful. That is to sayn, that shrewes ben punyshed, or els that good folke be yguerdoned, the which folkes seme that her propre wyl ne sent hem to that one, ne to that other. That is to sayne, neyther to good ne harme: but cōstreyneth hem certayne necessitie of thynges to comen, thā ne shullen there neuer bene, ne neuer ben-eth byce ne vertue, but it shullen rather be confusyon of all deseruyng medled without discretion. And yet there folowyth an other inconuenience, of the whyche there ne maye be thought nomore felonous, ne more wycked and that is thus, that so as the ordre of thynges is ydle, and cōmeth of ꝑpurueyaunce of god, ne that nothyng nys lefull to the counsayles of mankynde, as who sayth, that me haue no power to don nothyng ne wyll nothynge, than folowyth it that our dyces ben referred to the maker of all good, as who sayth: than folowyth it, that God ought to haue the blame of our dyces, syth he constrayneth vs by necessitie to done dyces: thā nys ther no reason to hopen in god ne to prayen to god, for what shulde any wight hopen to god, or why shuld he prayē to god, sith that the ordynaunce of destemy, which ꝑ ne maye not ben enclyned, knytteth and streyneth all thynges that men may desyren. Thā shulde there be done away thylke oneiye alyaunce betwene God and man, that is to sayne, to hopen and to prayen. But by the ꝑyce of ryghtousnesse & of very mekenesse, we deserue the guerdon of deuyne grace, whyche ꝑ is inestimable, that is to say, that is so grete that it ne may not ben ful praysed, & this is only the maner, that is to saye, hope & prayers. For which it semeth that mē woll speke with god, and by reason of supplicatiō be conioyned to thylke clerenesse, that nys not approchen no rather or that men seke it and impetren it. And yf men ne wone not ꝑ hope ne prayers ne haue no strengthes by the necessitie of thynges to comen receyued, what thyng is there than by which we mowen be conioyned and cleaued to thylke soueraine ꝑince of thynges. For which it behoueth by necessitie that the lignage of mankynde, as thou songe a litle here beforne, be departed, and vnioyned from hys well, and fayleth of his begynnynge, that is to sayne, God.

Que nam discordis federa rerum Causa resoluit: quis tanta deus-

What discordable cause hathe torent and vnioyned the byndyng or the alyaunce of thynges, that is to sayne, the connections of God and of man-

which

which god hath establyshed so great batayl betwene these two sothfast or very thinges that is to sayne, betwene the purueyaunce of god and free wyl, that they ben syngular and deuyded, ne that they ne wollen not ben medled ne coupled togyther. But there nys no discorde to the very thynges, but they deuen away certayn to hem self. But ỳ thought of man confounded and ouerthrowē by the darke membres of the body, ne maye not by fyre of his darked lokynge, that is to sayne, by the vigour of his mysyght, whyle ỳ soule is in the bodye, knowen the thyn subtel knyttynges of thinges. But wherfore eschaufeth it so by so great loue to fynden thylke notes of soth yeouered, that is to sayne, wherfore eschaufeth the thought of man by so greate desyre, to knowe thylke notifications that ben yhid vnder the couertures of soth. wote it ought thylke thynhes that it anguyshous desyreth to knowe. As who sath, naye. For noman ne trauayleth for to weten thynges that he wot: and therfore ỳ text sayth thus. But who trauayleth to weten thynges yknowe. and yf that he ne knoweth hem not, what seketh thylke blynde thought. what is he that desyreth any thynges, of whyche he wot ryght nought. As who sayeth, who so desyreth any thinges, nedes somwhat he knoweth of it, or els he ne coude not desyren it: or who maye folowe thynges ỳ ne bene not ywyste, a though ỳ he seke the thynges where shal he fynde hem. what wyght that is all vncunnyng and ignoraunt may know the forme that is yfounde.

But whan the soule beholdeth a seeth the bre thought, ỳ is to sayn god, thā knoweth it togyther the sum and singularities, that is to sayne, the principles, a euerych of hem by hem self. But now whyle the soule is hid in the cloude, and in the darkenesse of the mē bres of the bodye, it ne hath not all forgeten it self, but it wholdeth the sum of thynges and leseth the singularities. Than who so ỳ seketh sothenesse, he nys in neyther nother habyte, for he wote not all, ne he ne hath nat all forgeten, but yet hym remembreth ỳ sum of thinges that he withholdeth, and asketh counsayle, and retreateth deplyche thynges ysene before, that is to sayne, the greate summe in his mynde. so that he mowe adoē the partes that he hathe forgeten, to thylke partyes that he hath withholden.

Tum illa: Uetus inquit, hec est de prouidētia q̄rela: Marcus Tullio. ꝛc

THan sayd she, this is (q she) the olde question of the purueyaūce of God. And Marcus Tullius whan he deuyded the deuynacyons, that is to sayne in hys bokes that he wrote of deuynacions, he moued greatly this questyon, and thou thy self hast ysought it moche, and vtterly and lōge but yet ne hath it not bene determyned ne espyed fermely and diligently of any of you, and the cause of this darkenesse and of thys difficultie is, for that the mouyng of the reason of mankynde ne may not mouen to, that is to sayne, applien or ioynen the simplicitie of the deuyne prescience, the which simplicitie of the deuyne prescience, yf that mē mighten thynkē it in any maner. That is to sayn that yf men myghten thynke and comprehēden the thynges ỳ god seeth hym selfe, than there dwelled vtterly no dout, the which reason and cause of difficulties, I shal assay at last to shewe and to spreden, whan I haue fyrst yspenden and answered to thy reasons by whiche thou art moued, for I aske why thou weneſt that thylk reasons of hem that assoylen this question ne be nat spredefully ynough ne sufficiēt, the which solucyō or the which reasō for ỳ it demeth, that the prescience is not of necessitie of thynges to come, as who sayth, any other way thā thus, but that thylke thynges that the prescience wot before, ne maye not vnbetyden, that is to sayne, that they moten betyde. But than yf that prescience ne putteth no necessitie to thinges to comen, as thou thy selfe haste confessed it, and beknowe a lytle here before, what cause or what is it, as who sayth, ther may no cause be, by which that the endes voluntary of thynges myghten be constrayned to certayne betydyng. For by grace of position so that thou may the better vnderstāde this that foloweth, I suppose that there ne be no prescience: Than aske I (q she) in as moche as apperteyneth to that, shulden than thynges that comen of free wyll be constrayned to betyding by necessitie. Boece. Nay (q I)

Dhi.

Phi. Than ayenwarde (quod he) I suppose þ there be prescience, but that it ne putteth no necessitie to thynges, than trowe I that this same fredome of wyll shall dwellen all hole and absolute and vnbounde. But thou wilt sayne, that al be it so, that prescience nis not cause of the necessitie of betyding to thinges to comen, algates yet it is a signe, that the thynges bene to betyden by necessitie. By this maner than, although the prescience had neuer be, yet algates or at lest way, it is certayne thyng that endes of betydynges of thynges to comen shulden be necessarye. For euery thynge sheweth and signifyeth onely what the thinge is, but it ne maketh not the thyng that it signifyeth. For which it behoueth fyrste to shewe that nothynge ne betydeth, that it ne betydeth by necessitie: so that it maye appere, that the prescience is sygne of necessitie, or els yf there were no necessitye, certes, thylke prescyence ne myght not be signe of thynge that nys not. But certes, it is now certayne, that the proue of this ysustreyned by stedfast reason, ne shall not bene lad ne proued by sygnes ne by argumentes, taken fro without, but by causes couenable and necessarye. But thou mayst sayne, how maye it be that the thynges ne betyden not, that bene purueyed to comen? But certes, ryght as we trowe that the thynges which that the purueyaunce wot before, to come ne be not to betyden. But that ne shulde we not demen, but rather although they shal betyden, yet ne haue they no necessitye of her kynde to betiden: and this mayst thou light ly appercenen by this that I shal sayn. For we sene manye thynges whan they ben before our eyen, ryght as men sene the carter worchynge in the tourmyng and in the attemprying or adressing of his cartes or chariots and by this maner, as who sayeth, mayst thou vnderstande of al other workemen. Is there thi any necessitie, or who sayth in our lokynge, that constraineth or compelleth any of thylke thynges to be done so? Boece. Nay (quod I) for in ydle and in vayne were all the effect of craftes, yf that al thynges weren moued by constraynynge of our eyen, or of our syght. Philosoph. The thynges than (quod he) that whan that men done hem, ne haue no necessitie that men done hem, ere tho same thynges fyrst or they be done, they ben to comen without necessitye: for why, there be some thynges to betyden, of which the endes and the betydinges of hem ben absolute and quyte of all necessitie. For certes, I ne trowe not that anye man wolde sayne this, that the thynges that men done nowe that they ne were to betyden fyrste, yet they were doone. And thylke same thynges, although men hadden wyst hem before, yet they haue free betydynges. For ryght as science of thinges present ne bryngeth in no necessitie to thynges that men done, ryght so to the prescience of thynges to commen, ne bryngeth in no necessitie to thynges betiden. But thou mayest sayne, that of thylke same it is douted, as whether that of thylke thynges that ne haue non tydes and betydinges necessaryes, if therof may ben any prescience.

For certes, they semen to discorden, for thou wenest that yf that thynges bene sene before that necessitie foloweth hem, and yf necessitie tarieth hem, they ne myght not be wyst before, and that nothyng maye be comprehended by science but certayne. And yf tho thynges ne haue no certayne betydynges, be purueyed as certayne it shoulde be darkenesse of opynyon, not sothfastnesse of sciencce. And thou wenest that it be druery for the holenesse of science, that any manne shulde deme a thynge to be otherwyse than it is it selfe, and the cause of this errour is, that of all the thynges that euerye wyghte hath knowe, they wene that tho thynges be knowe onlyne by the strength and by the nature of the thynges that ben wyst or knowe and it is all the contrarye: for all that euer is knowe, it is rather comprehended and knowe not after his strengthe and his nature, but after the faculty, that is to sayne, the power and the nature of hem that knowen. And for that this thyng shulde nowe shewe by a short ensample of roundenesse of a body otherwyse than the syght of the eye knoweth it, and other wyse than the touchynge.

The lokynge, by castynge of his beames, wayteth and seeth from a ferre al the body togyther, without mouynge of it selfe, but the touchynge cleueth to the rounde body, and moueth aboute the enuyronynge, and comprehendeth the partyes by roundenesse, and the man him selfe otherwyse beholdeth hym, and otherwayes ymagynacyon, and

otherwyse

ctherwyse reason, and otherwise inteligẽce
for the wyt comprehendeth without forthe
the fygure of the body of man, that is insta
blyshed in the matter subiect. But the yma
gynacion comprehendeth onely the figure wi
out the mater. Reason surmounteth ymagi
nacion, and comprehendeth by vniuersal lo
kyng the cõmune speche, but the eye of intel
ligence is hygher, for it surmounteth the en
uyronyng of the vniuersite, and loketh ouer
that, by pure subtilte of thought. Thylke
same symple fourme of man, that is perdu
rable in the diuine thought, in whiche thys
ought greatly to be considred, that the hyest
strength for to comprehenden thynges em
braceth and containeth the lower strength,
but ỳ lower strẽgth ne aryseth not in no ma
ner to the hyer strength. For wyt ne may cõ
prehende nothyng out of mater, ne that ima
gynacyon ne loketh not the vniuersal speces
ne reason ne taketh not the symple fourme,
so as intelligence taketh it. But intelligence
that loketh all abouen, whan it hath com
prehended the fourme, it knoweth & demeth
all the thynges that ben vnder the fourme,
but she knoweth hem in thylke maner, in
whych it comprehendeth thylk same symple
fourme ỳ ne may neuer ben knowẽ of none of
ỳ other, that is to say, to non of the thre for
ward strengthes of the soule, for it knoweth
the vniuersite of reason, and the fygure of
ymagynacion, and the sensyble material cõ
ceyued by wyt, ne it vseth not ne of reason,
ne of ymagynacion ne of wyt without forth
but it beholdeth al thynges, so as I shal say
by a stroke of thought fermely without dis
cours of collacion. Certes reason whan it lo
keth any thyng vniuersall, it ne vseth not of
ymaginacyon ne wyt, and algates yet it cõ
prehendeth the thynges ymaginable and sẽ
sible, for reason is she that diffinyssheth the
vniuersall of her conceyte ryght thus. Man
is a reasonable two foted beest, and how so
that this knowyng is vniuersal, yet nis ther
no wyght that ne wot well that a man is a
thynge ymaginable and sensyble, and thys
same contrarieth well reason, but that nys
not by ymagynacion, nor by wytte, but it lo
keth it by reasonable conception. Also yma
gynacyon, all be it so, that it taketh of wytte
the begynnyng to sene and fourmen the fy
gures algates, although that wyt ne were
not present, yet it enuyroneth and comprehẽ
deth all thynges sensyble, not by reason sen
syble of demyng, but by reason ymaginatyf
Seest thou not than, that al the thynges in
knowyng vsen more of her faculte, or ofher
power, than they done of the faculte or po
wer of thynges that ben to knowen, ne that
is no wronge, for so as euery iudgement is
the dede or doing of hym that demeth, it be
houeth that euerye wyght perfourme hys
werke and hys intention not of forayne po
wer, but of his propre power.

Quondam porticus attulit, Ob
scuros minium senes. &c.

THan the porche, that is to saye
a gate of the towne of Athnes
there as philosophers hadden
congregacion to dispute thilk
porche brought somtyme olde
men full darke in her sentences, that is to
say, philosophers that hyghten Stoiciens, ỳ
wende that ymages and sensibylities, that
is to say, sensyble ymaginacions or elsyma
gynacyons of sensible thynges, wer empun
ted into soules fro bodyes without forth as
who sayth thylke Stoiciens wenden that the
soule had be naked of hym selfe, as a myr
rour or a clene perchemyne, so that al figu
res musten first comen fro thynges fro vp
out into soules, and ben empunted into sou
les, ryght as we ben wonte somtyme by a
swyft poyntell to fyren letters empunted in
the smothnesse or in the playnesse of the ta
ble of ware, or in the parchemyne that hath
no fygure ne note in it. Glose. But nowe ar
gueth Boece agaynst that opynion, & sayth
thus. But yf the thynynge soule ne imply
eth nothyng that is to sayne, ne doth thyng
by his propre mouynge, but suffreth & lyeth
subiecte to the fygures & to the notes of bo
dyes without forth, and yeldeth ymages y
del, curl & vayne in the maner of a myrrour,
whence thynketh than or whence commeth
thilke knowynge in our soule, ỳ discerneth &
beholdeth all thynges, and whẽce is thilke
strẽgth that beholdeth the synguler thynges
or els whẽce is the strength that dyuydeth
thynges yknowe, & thylke strength that ga
thered togyther thynges deuyded, & strẽgth
that choseth the entrechaunged waye.

For

For somtyme it heaueth the heed, that is to say, that it heaueth vp the entencio to ryght hyghe thynges, and somtyme it descendeth into ryght lowe thynges: and whan it returneth into hym selfe, it reprouеth and destroyeth the false thynges by the true thynges. Certes, this strength is cause more effycient and moche more myghty, to sene and to knowen thynges, than thylke cause that suffreth and receyueth the notes and fygures impressed in maner of mater. Algates the passyon, that is to saye, the suffraunce of the wyt in the quycke body goth before exciting and mouyng the strengthes of the thought, ryght so as whan that clearenesse smyteth the eyen, and moueth hem to sene, or ryght so as voyce or sowne hourleth to the eares, and cōmoueth hem to hearken, than is the strength of the thought moued and excyted cleaueth forthe to semblable mouynges the speces that it halte within it selfe, and addeth the speces to the notes, and to thynges withoutforth, and meddieth the ymages of thynges withoutforth, to thinges hyd with in hym selfe.

Quod si in corporibus sencientibus quā nis efficiant instrumenta sensuum. &c

But what is that, in bodyes to be seied, that is to say, in the takyng and in the knowyng of bodyly thynges. And all be it so, þ the qualities of bodyes that be object fro withoutforth, mouen and entalenten the instrumentes of the wyttes, and all be it so, that the passyon of the body, that is to sayne, the wyt or the suffraunce goeth before the strength or the worchynge corage, the which passyon or suffraūce cleperth forth the dede of the thought in it selfe, and moueth and excyteth in this meane whyle, the fourmes that resten withenforth, and insensyble bodyes, as I haue sayde, our corages nis not taught or empryented by passyon to knowe these thynges, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strēgth the passion or suffraunce, subiect to the body: moche more thā tho thynges ben absolute and quyte fro all talentes or affections of bodyes, as god or his aungels, ne folowen not in deceyuynge thynges object fro thoutforth, but they accomplysshe and speden the dedes of her thought By this reason than there comen many maner of knowynges to dyuers, and to differynge substaunces. For the wyt of the body the which wyt is naked and dispoyled of all other knowynge, thylke wyt cōmeth to bestes, the whiche ne mowen not mouen hem selfe here and there, as oysters and muskels and other suche shelfysh of the see, that ciuēn ben norysshed to rockes, but þ ymaginacion cōmeth of remuable bestes, that semen to haue talent to flyen or to desiré any thyng But reason is aloneiye the ymage of mankynde, ryght as intelligence is aloniy the diuine nature, of which it folowеth, that thilke knowynge is more worthe than is eyther syns it knoweth by his propre nature, not oneiye his subiecte as who sayth: it ne knoweth not aloneiy that appertayneth properly to his knowyng, but it knoweth the substeetes of al other knowynges.

But how shal it than be, yf that wyt and ymagination stryuen ayen reasonynge and sayne that of thylke vniuersall thynge that reason weneth to sene, þ it nis ryght nought for wyt and ymagination sayne, that that is sensyble or ymagynable, it ne maye not ben vniuersall. Than is there eyther the iugement of reason forthe, ne that there nys no thynge sensyble, or els for that reason woot well, that many thynges be subiecte to wyt and to ymaginacyon: than is the conceptio of reason vaine and false, which that loketh and comprehendeth, that that is sensyble & synguler, as vniuersall. And yf that the reason wolde answer ayenst these two, that is to saye, to wyt and ymagination, and saye that forthy she her selfe, that is to sayne reason loketh and comprehendeth by reason of vniuersalitie, both that that is sensible, and that that is ymaginable, and thylke two, þ is to sayne, wyt and ymagination, ne mowen not stretchen hem selfe to the knowyng of vniuersalitie, for that the knowynge of hem, ne maye not exceeden ne surmounten the bodyly fygures. Certes of the knowyng of thynges men oughten rather yeuen more credence to the more stedfast, and to þ more perfyte iudgement in this maner stryuyng, than we that haue strēgth of reasonyng and

of

of ymagynacion, and of wytte, that is to say, by reason and by ymaginacion, we wolde rather prayse the cause of reason, as who sayth, than the cause of wytte and of ymagynacion. Semblable thyng is it, that the reson of mãkynde ne weneth not that the diuyne intelligẽce, beholdeth or knoweth thynges to come, but right as the reason of mãkynde knoweth hem: for thou arguyst thus, that yf that it ne seme not to men, that some thynges haue certayne betydinges, they ne maye not be wyste before certaynly to betyden, and than is there no prescience of thylke thynges: & yf we trowe that prescience be in these thynges, than is there nothing that betydeth by necessyte. But yf we myght haue iugement of the diuyne thought, as we ben parteners of reson, right so as we haue demed, that it behoueth by ymagynacion and wytte, and beneth reason, ryght so wolde we demen that it were right full thing, that mans reason ought to submyt it selfe to be beneth the diuyne thought, for whyche yf we may, as who sayth, that yf we may I counsayle that we enhaunce vs in the heyght of thylke souerayne intellygence, for there shal reason wel sene that that it ne may not behold in it selfe, and certes that is thus, in what maner the prescience of god seeth al thynges and diffynyssheth, all though they haue no certayne betydynges: ne this is none opynyon, but rather the symplicite of the souerayne science, that is not shette wythin no maner of boundes.

Quam variis terras animalia permeant figuris, Namq; alia extento sunt corpore. &c.

The beestes passen by the erthes by ful diuers figures, for some of hẽ haue her bodyes straynt, and crepen in the duste, & drawen after hem a trace or a forough contynued, that is to saye, as neddres and snayles, other beestes, by the wandryng lyghtenesse of her wynges beaten the wyndes, and ouer swymmen the spaces of the longe ayre, by moste flyeng. And other beestes gladen hem selfe, to dyggen her traces or her steppes in the erthe wyth her gorge or wyth her fete, and to gone eyther by the grene feldes, or elis to walken vnder the woodes. And all be it so that thou seest that they distorden by diuers fourmes, algates her faces enclyned heuyeth her dull wyttes, onely the lynage of man heaueth highest hys hye heed, and standeth lyght wyth hys vpryght bodye, and beholdeth the erthes vnder hym. And but yf thou erthly man wareste yuell out of thy wytte, thys figure amonesteth the, that askest the heuen with thy right vysage, and hast areysed thy forheed to beaven vp on hygh thy corage, so that thy thoust ne be not heuyed ne put lowe vnder fote, syth that thy body is so hygh areysed.

Quoniam igitur vti paulo ante monstratum est, omne quod scitur. &c.

Therfore than, as I haue shewed a lytell here before, yt all thing yt is wyst nys not knowen by thys nature propre, but by ẏ nature of hem ẏ coprehenden it. Let vs loken nowe in as moch as it is lefull to vs, as who sayth, let vs loken nowe as we may, which that is the estate of the diuyne substaunce, so that we may well knowe eke what his science is.

The commune iugement of all creatures reasonables than is that God is eterne. Let vs consyder than what is eternyte, for certes that shall shewen vs togyder the diuyne nature and the diuyne science. Eternyte than is perfyte possessyon, and all togyder of lyfe interminable, and that sheweth the more clerely by the cõparyson or collacyon of temporall thynges. For all thyng that lyueth in tyme, it is present, and proceedeth fro preteryte tes in to futures, that is to sayne, from tyme passed in to tyme comynge: ne there nys no thynge establyssched in tyme, that maye embraen togyther all the space of thys lyfe, for certes yet ne hathe it not taken the tyme of to morowe, and it hath lost that of yesterday. And certes in the lyfe of thys daye, ye ne lyue nomore, but ryght as in thys mouable and transytorye moment. Than thylke thynge that suffreth temporall condycion, al though that it neuer began to be, ne though it neuer ceasse to be (as Aristoteles demed of the worlde) & although the lyfe of it be stretched

wyth infynite of tyme, yet algates nys it no
suche thynge, as men myght trowen by right
that it is eterne. For all thought that it com-
prehende and embrace the space of the lyfe in-
fynite, yet algates ne embraseth it not þ space
of the lyfe all togyther, for it ne hath not the
futures that be not yet: ne it ne hathe no len-
ger the preteritees that be don or passed. But
thylke thyng than, that hath and comprehen-
deth togyder al the plentie of the lyfe interm-
nable, to whome there ne fayleth naught of
the future, and to whom there nys naught of
the preterite escaped or passed, thylke same is
ywitnessed and proued by right to ben etern.

And it behoueth by necessyte that thylke
thynge be alway present to hym selfe, and co-
petent, as who sayethe, alway present to hym
selfe, and so mighty, that all be ryght at hys
pleasaunce, and that he haue all present the
infynyte of þ mouable tyme. Wherfore some
men trowen wrongfully, that whan they he-
ren that it semed to Plato, that thys worlde
had neuer begynnynge of tyme, that it neuer
shall haue fayleyng: they wene in thylke ma-
ner, that this worlde be maked eterne, wyth
hys maker, as who saith, they wene that this
worlde and god be maked togyther eterne.
And that is a wrongfull wenynge, for other
thyng it is to be ladde by the lyfe interminа-
ble, as Plato graunted to the worlde, and o
ther thyng it is to embrace togyther al þ pre-
sence of the lyfe that is interminable, which
thynge is clere and manyfest to the diuyne
thought. Ne it ne shulde not seme to vs that
god is elder than thynges that ben maked by
quantyte of tyme, but rather by þ prosperyte
of hys symple nature. For thys ylke infynyte
mouynges of temporall thynges foloweth
this presentary estate of this life immouable
& so as it ne may not countrefayten ne fayne
it, ne be euenlyke to it for þ immobilyte, that
is to say, that is in the eternyte of god, it fay-
leth & falleth in to mouyng fro the symplicite
of the presence of god, & decreaseth in þ in-
fynite quantyte of future & preterite. And so
as it maye not haue togyther al the plentie of
the lyfe, algates yet for as moch as it ceaseth
neuer for to ben in some maner, yet it semeth
somdele to vs, that it foloweth & resembleth
thylke thing, that it ne may not attayne to ne
fulfyllen, and byndeth it selfe to some maner
presence of this lytel moment, the which pre-
sence of this lytel and swift moment, for that
it beareth a maner ymage or lykenesse of the
aye dwelling of god: it graunteth to such ma
ner thynges, as it betydeth to, that it semeth
hem, as these thinges haue ben, and ben. And
for that the presence of such lytell moment ne
may not dwell, therfore it rauyshed and tok
thinfynite way of tyme, that is to say, by suc
cession, and by this maner it is done, for that
it shulde cõtinue the lyfe in goyng, of þ which
lyfe it ne myght not embrace the plentye of
dwelling. And for thy if we wollen put wor
thy names to thynges that folowen Plato,
let vs saye than sothlye, that god is eterne,
and that the worlde is perpetuell. Than seth
euery iugemẽt knoweth and comprehendeth
by hys own nature, thynges that ben subiect
vnto hym, there is to god alwayes an eterne
and a presentarye estate. And the scyence of
hym that ouerpasseth all temporall moment,
dwelleth in symplycite of hys presence, and
embraseth and consydereth all the infynyte
spaces of tymes preterytes, and of tymes fu
tures, and loketh in hys symple knowyng all
thynges of preterite right as they were vpon
presentarye ryght nowe. If thou wylte than
thynken and adwyse the prescyence, by which
it knoweth all thynges, thou ne shalt not de
men it as prescience of thynges to comen but
thou shalt demen more ryghtfully that it is
scyence of presence or of instaunce that neuer
ne fayleth, for whyche it nys not ycleped pru
dence, but it shulde rather ben clepped pur
ueyaunce, whyche is establyshed fulferre fro
ryght lowe thynges, and beholdeth fro me a
ferre all thynges, right as it were fro the hye
heyght of thynges. Why askest thou than or
why dysputest thou thã, that thylke thynges
ben done by necessyte, whyche that ben ysene
and yknowen by the deuyne syght, sythe that
forsoth men ne maken nat thylke thynges ne
cessarye, whyche that they sene ben ydone in
her syght, for addeth thy beholdynge any ne
cessyte, to thylke thynges which thou behol
dest present. Boe. Naye (q I) Philo. Certes
(q she) than, yf men myghten maken anye
digne cõparyson or collacyon of the presence
dyuyne, and of the presence of mankynde:
right so as ye sene some thynges in this tem
porall presence, ryght so seeth god all thynge
by his eterne presence, wherfore this dyuyne
prescience ne chaungeth not the nature of the

properte

propertie of thinges, but beholdeth such thinges present to him ward, as they shulden betyden to you warde in tyme to comen. Ne it ne confoundeth not the ingementes of thynges, but by one syght of hys thought he knoweth the thynges to comen, as well necessary as not necessary. Right so whan ye sene together a man walke on the erth, and ꝑ sunne aryseu in the heuen, all be it so that ye sene together that one and that other: yet neuertheless ye demen and discernen, that that one is voluntary, and that other is necessary: Right so than the diuyne lokyng, beholding al thinges vnder hym, ne troubleth nat the qualyte of thynges that ben certaynly present to him warde, but as to the condycyon of tyme, forloth they ben future, for whiche it foloweth, that this nys none opinyon, but rather a sted fast knowynge ystrengthed by sothnesse, that whan that god knoweth any thynge to be, he ne vnwote nat that thilke thyng wanteth necessyte to be, thys is to sayne, that whan that god knoweth any thynge to betyde, he wote well ꝑ it ne hathe no necessyte to betyde. And yf thou seyst here that thylke thynge that god seeth to betyde, it ne maye not vnbetyde, as who sayth it mote betyde, and thilke thynge that ne may nat vnbetyde, it mote betyden by necessyte, I that thou streyn me to this name of the necessyte. Certes I will well confessen and beknowen a thyng of full sad trouth, but vnneth shall there any wyght mowe sene it or come therto, but yf that he be beholder of the diuyne thought, for I will answere the thus, that thylke thyng that is future, whe it is referred to the diuyne knowyng, than it is necessary. But certes whan it is vnderstande in hys own kynde, men sene it vtterly free and absolute fro al necessyte. For certes there ben two maners of necessytees, that one necessyte is symple, as thus, that is behoueth by necessyte, that all men ben mortall or deedly. Another necessyte is condycyonel, as thus, if thou woost that a man walketh, it behoueth by necessyte that he walke, thylke thyng than that any wight hath yknowe to be, it ne maye nat be none otherwyse than he knoweth it to be. But this condicion ne draweth nat with her thilk necessyte symple, for certes this necessite condicionall, ꝑ propre nature of it ne maketh it nat, but the adiection of the condycyon maketh it. For no necessyte ne constrayneth a man to gone, that goth by his propre wyll, al be it so that whan he goth, that it is necessary that he gothe. Right on this same maner than, yf that the purueyaunce of god seeth any thyng present, thā mote thylke thynge ben by necessyte, although that it ne haue no necessyte of his owne nature. But certes the futures that betyden by fredom of arbytrie, god seeth hem al togyder present. These thynges thā if they ben referred to the deuyne syght, than ben they maked necessary by the condycyon of the deuyne knowyng. But certes, yf thylke thynges ben consydered by hem selfe, they ben absolute of necessyte, and ne forleten not, ne cessen nat of the lyberte of her own nature. Thā certes wythout doute all the thynges shullen ben don, whyche that god woot before that they ben to comen and betyden of free arbytrie, or of free wyll, that al be it so that they betyden, yet algates ne lese they not her propre nature in beynge, by the whyche fyrst or they weren done, they hadden power not to haue betyde. Boe. What is thys to sayne than, ꝙ I, that thynges ne be not necessarye by her propre nature, so that they comen in all maners in the lykenesse of necessyte by condycyon of the diuyne science? Philo. This is the difference ꝙ she that tho thynges whyche that I purposed the a lytell here before, that is to sayn, sonne arysyng, and the man walkyng that therwhyles that thylke thynges ben done, they ne myght not ben vndone. Nathelesse that one of hem or it was done, it behoueth by necessyte that it was doone, but not that other. Right so it is here that the thynges whych that god hath present, wythouten doute they shullen ben, but some of hem dyscenden of the nature of thynges as ꝑ sunne arysynge, and some discenden of the power of the doers, as the man walkynge. Boece. Than sayde I, no wrong, that yf these thynges be referred to the diuyne knowyng, than ben they necessarye, and yf they ben consydred by hem selfe, than ben they absolute fro the bonde of necessyte. Right so as all thynges that apereth or sheweth to the wyttes, yf thou referre hem to reason it is vnyuersal, and yf thou loke it or refer it to it selfe, than is it synguler. But nowe yf thou sayest thus, that yf that it be in my power to chaungen my purpose, than shall I vorden the purueyaunce of god, whan peraventure I shall

hāne chaunged the thynges whyche that he knoweth beforne ayē. Than shall I answeren the thus: Certes thou mayst wel chaūge thy purpose, but fyr as moche as the present forthnesse of the diuyne purueyaunce beholdeth that thou mayste chaunge thy purpose, and whether thou chaunge it or no, and why derwarde that thou tourne it, thou ne mayste not eschue the diuyne prescience: right so thou ne mayste not flye the syght of the present eye all though that thou tourne thy selfe by thy fre wyll in to dyuers actiōs. But thou mayst sayne ayen to thys thus: Howe shall it than be, shall not the diuyne science ben chaunged by my dyspoſycion, whan that I wyll one thyng nowe, and nowe another thyng? And thylke prescience ne semeth it not to entrechaunge stoundes of knowing, as who saith ne shall it not semen to vs, that the diuyne prescience entrechaungeth hys dyuers stoundes of knowynge, so that it knowe somtyme one thynge, and somtyme it knoweth the contrarye of that thynge? Philo.

No forsothe (q she) for the diuyne syght renneth beforne and seeth al the futures, and clepeth hem ayen, and retourneth hem to the propre prescience of hys propre knowynge, ne he entrechaungeth not, so as thou weneſt the stoundes of hys forknowynge, as nowe this, nowe that: but he dwellyng aye cometh beforne, and embraseth at o stroke all the mutacions. And this prescience to comprehenden and to seen all thynges, god ne hath not take it of the betydinges of thynges to comen, but of hys propre symplicite. And hereby is alloyled thylke thynges that thou puttest a lytell here beforne, that is to sayn, that it is vnworthy thyng to sayne þ our futures yeuen cause of the prescience of god. For certes strength of the diuyne science, whyche that embraseth all thynges by his presentarie knowynge, establyssheth maner to all thynges, and it ne oweth not to latter thynges. And sythe þ these thynges ben thus, that is to sayne, that necessyte is not in thynges by the diuyne prescience, than is there fredom of arbytrie that dwelleth hole and vnwemmed to mortal mē, ne the lawes ne purposen not wycked medes and paynes to the wyllynges of men, that ben vnbounde and quyte of all necessyte: And god beholder and forewetter of al thinges dwelleth aboue, and the prescience eternyte of syght renneth alwaye wyth the dyuers qualyte of our dedes, dispensynge or ordeynyng medes to good men, and tourmentes to wycked mē. Ne in ydell ne in vayne ne ben there not put in god hope and prayers, that ne mowen not ben vnspedefull, ne worthout effecte, whan they ben rightfull.

Withstande than and eschew thou vices, worshyppe and loue thou vertues, areyse thy corage to rightful hopes, yelde thou humble prayers and hyghe. Great necessyte of prowesse and of vertue is encharged and commaūded to you yf ye nyll not dissimulen, sythe that ye woschen and doone, that is to sayne, your dedes and your werkes beforn the eyen of the iuge that seeth and also that demeth al thynges. Deo gracias.

¶ Thus endeth the boke of Boecius of the consolacion of philosophie, and hereafter foloweth the dreame of Chaucer.

The dreame

✠ The dreame of Chaucer.



Haue gret wõder by thys lyght
Howe I lyue, for daye ne nyght
I maye not slepe, welnye nought
I haue so many an ydle thought
Purely for defaute of slepe
That by my trouthe, I take no kepe
Of nothyng, howe it cometh or gothe
Ne me nys nothyng lefe nor lothe
All is thyche good to me
Joye or sorowe, where so it be
For I haue lefyng in no thyng
But as it were a mased thyng
Al day in poynte to fall adoun
For sorowfull ymagynacyoun
Is alway holy in my mynde
And well ye wote, agayns kynde
It were to lyuen in thys wyse
For nature wolde not suffyse
To none erthly creature
Not longe tyme to endure
Without slepe, and be in sorowe
And I ne maye, ne nyght ne morowe
Slepe, and this melancolye
And certes I haue for to dye
Defaute of slepe and heuynesse
Hath slayne my spyrite of quickenesse
That I haue loste all lustyhed
Suche fantasyes ben in myne heed
So I not what is beste to do
But men myght aske me why so
I may not slepe, and what me is
But natheleſſe, who aske thys
I leseth hys asking trewly
My selfen can not tell why
The sothe, but trewly as I gesse
I holde it be a sykenesse
That I haue suffred thys eyght yere
And yet my boote is neuer the nere
For there is phisycien but one
That may me heale, but that is done
Passe we ouer vntyll efte
That wyll not be, mote nede be lefte
Our fyrst mater is good to kepe
So whan I sawe I myght not slepe
Tyll nowe late, thys other nyght
Vpon my bedde I sate vpryght
And bade one rechе me a booke
I romaunce, and he it me toke
To rede, and dryue the nyght away
For me thought it better play
Than play eyther at Chesse or tables
And in thys boke were written fables
That clerkes had in olde tyme
And other poetes, put in ryme
To rede, and for to be in mynde
whyle men loued the lawe of kynde
Thys boke me spake, but of suche thynges
Of quenes lyues, and of kynges
And many other thynges smale
Amonge all thys I fonde a tale
That me thought a wonder thyng.
This was the tale: There was a kyng
That hyght Seys, and had a wyfe
The beste that myght beare lyfe
And thys quene hyght Alcyone
So it befyll, thereafter sone
Thys kyng woll wenden ouer see
To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in thys wyse
Suche a tempest gan to ryse
That brake her maste, and made it fall
And clefte her shyp, and dreynt hem all
That neuer was founde, as it telles
Borde ne man, ne nothyng elles
Right thus thys kyng Seys loste hys lyfe
Nowe for to speke of Alcyone hys wyfe
This lady that was lefte at home
Hath wonder, that the kyng ne come
Home, for it was a longe terme
Anon her herte began to yerne
And for that her thought euer mo
It was not wele, her thought so
She longed so after the kyng
That certes it were a pytous thyng
To tell her hertely sorowfull lyfe
That she had, thys noble wyfe
For hym alas, she loued alderbest
Anone she sent bothe eest and west
To seke hym, but they founde nought
Alas (q she) that I was wrought
And wher my lorde my loue be deede
Certes I nyll neuer eate breed
I make a vowe to my god here
But I mowe of my lorde here

Suche sorowe thys lady to her toke
That trewely, I that made thys boke
Had suche pyte, and suche routhe
To rede her sorowe, that by my trouthe
I forde the worse all the morowe
After to thynken on her sorowe
So whan thys lady coude here no worde
That no man myght fynde her lorde
Full ofte she swouned, and sayd alas
For sorowe, full nyghe woode she was
Ne she coude no rede but one
But downe on knees she sate anone
And wepte, that pyte was to here
I mercy swete lady dere
(q she) to Juno her goddesse
Helpe me out of thys distresse
And yeue me grace my lorde to se
Hoone, or were where so he be
Or howe he fareth, or in what whyle
And I shall make you sacrifyse
And holy yours become I shall
Wyth good wyll, body, herte and all
And but thou wolte this, lady swete
Sende me grace to slepe and mete
In my slepe some certayne swenen
Where through that I may knowe euen
Whether my lorde be quicke or deed
With that word she hynge down the heed
And fell in a swoune, as colde as stone
Her women caught her vp anone
And brought her in bed all naked
And she forweped and forwaked
Was wery, and thus the derd slepe
Fell on her, or she toke kepe
Through Juno, that had herde her boone
That made her to slepe soone
For as she prayde, eyght so was done
In dede, for Juno eyght anone
Called thus her messangere
To do her erande, and he come nere
Whan he was come, she bad hym thus
Go bet (q Juno) to Morpheus
Thou knowest hym well, the god of slepe
Nowe vnderstande well, and take kepe
Saye thus on my halfe, that he
Go fall in to the great se
And byd hym that on all thynge
He take vp Seys body the kynge
That lyeth full pale, and nothynge rody
Byd hym crepe in to the body
And do it gone to Alcyone
The quene, there she lyeth alone
And shewe her shortly it is no nay
Howe it was dreynt thys other day
And do the body speke eyght so
Right as it was wonned to do
The whyles that it was alyue
Go nowe fast, and hye the blyue.
This messanger tok leue and wente
Upon hys way, and neuer he stente
Tyll he came to the darke daley
That stante bytwene rockes tweyn
There neuer yet grewe corne ne gras
Ne tree, ne naught that ought was
Beest ne man, ne nought elles
Saue that there were a fewe welles
Came rennynge fro the clyffes adowne
That made a derdly slepynge sowne
And rennen downe eyght by a caue
That was vnder a rocke ygraue
Amyd the daley wonder depe
There these goddes lay aslepe
Morpheus and Ecrympasteyre
That was the god of slepes heyre
That slepte, and dyd none other werke
This caue was also as derke
As hell pytte, ouer all aboute
They had good leyser for to route
To hye who might slepe best
Some hynge her chynne vpon her brest
And slepte vpryght her heed yhed
And some lay naked in her bed
And slepte whyles theyr dayes last
This messangere come rennyng fast
And cryed ho ho, awake anone
It was for nought, there herde hym none
Awake (q he) who lyeth there
And blewe hys horne eyght in her eere
And cryed awaketh wonder hye
This god of slepe, wyth hys one eye
Cast vp, and asked who clepeth there
I am I (q thys messangere)
Juno bade thou shuldest gone
And tolde hym what he shulde done
As I haue tolde you here before
It is no nede reherse it more
And wente hys waye whan he had sayde
Anone thys god of slepe abrayde
Out of hys slepe and gan to go
And dyd as he had bydde hym do
Toke vp the dede body soone
And bare it forthe to Alcione
His wyfe the quene, there as she lay
Right euen a quarter before day

And stode

And stode ryght at her beddes fete
And called her ryght as she hete
By name, and sayd: My swete wyfe
Awake, let be your sorowfull lyfe
For in your sorowe, there lyeth no rede
For certes swete loue, I am but dede
Ye shall me neuer on lyue yse
But good swete herte that ye
Bury my body, for suche a tyde
Ye mowe it fynde, the see beside
And farewell swete, my worldes blysse
I praye god your sorowe lysse
So lyttell whyle our blysse lasteth
With that her eyen vp she casteth
And sawe naught, alas quod she for sorowe
And dyed within the thyrde morowe
But what she sayd more in that swowe
I maye not tell you as nowe
It were to longe for to dwell
My fyrst matere I wyll you tell
wherfore I haue tolde thys thynge
Of Alcione, and Ceyx the kynge
For thus moche dare I saye well
I had be doluen euerydel
And deed ryght through defaute of slepe
Yf I ne had red, and take kepe
Of thys tale nerre before
And I wyll tell you wherfore
For I ne myght for bote ne bale
Slepe, or I had redde thys tale
Of thys dreyme Ceyx the kynge
And of the goddes of slepynge
when I had red thys tale wele
And ouerlooked it euerydele
Me thought wonder, yf it were so
For I had neuer herde speake or tho
Of no goddes, that coude make
Men to slepe, ne for to wake
For I ne knewe neuer god but one
And in my game, I sayd anone
And yet me lyst ryght euell to play
Rather then that I shulde dey
Through defaute of slepynge thus
I wolde gyue thylke Morpheus
Or that goddes dame Juno
Or some wyght els, I ne rought who
To make me slepe, and haue some rest
I wyll gyue hym the aldyr best
Fyrst, that euer he abode hys lyue
And here on worde, ryght nowe as blyue
Yf he woll make me slepe a lyte
Of downe of pure downes whyte
I woll gyue hym a fether bed
Rayed wyth golde, and ryght well cled
In fyne blacke Sattyn doutremere
And many a pylowe, and euery bere
Of cloth of raynes to slepe on softe
Hym thare not nede to tourne ofte
And I woll yeue hym all that falles
To hys chambre and to hys halles
I woll do paynte wyth pure golde
And tapyte hem full many folde
Of one sute thys shall he haue
Yf I wyst where were hys caue
Yf he can make me slepe sone
As dyd the goddesse, quene Alcione
And thus thys ylke god Morpheus
Maye wynne of me mo fees thus
Then euer he wanne, and to Juno
That is hys goddesse, I shall so do
I trowe that she shall holde her payde.
I had vnneth that worde ysayde
Ryght thus as I haue tolde you
That sodeynly I wyst howe
Suche a lust anone me toke
To slepe, that ryght vpon my boke
I fell aslepe, and therwyth euen
Me mette so inly suche a sweuen
So wonderfull, that neuer yet
I trowe no man had the wyt
To coone well my sweuen rede
No nought Joseph wythout drede
Of Egypte, he that rad so
The kynges metynge Pharao
No more then coude the lest of vs
Ne nat scatily Macrobeus
He that wrote all the auysyon
That he met kynge Scipion
The noble man the Affrican
Suche meruayles fortuned then
I trowe a rede my dremes euen
Lo thus it was, thys was my sweuen.
Me thought thus, that it was May
And in the dawnynge there I laye
Me met thus in my bed all naked
And loked forth, for I was waked
wyth smale foules a great hepe
That had afrayed me out of my slepe
Through noyse, and swetnesse of her songe
And as me met, they sate amonge
Upon my chambre rofe wythout
Upon the tyles ouer all about
And euerych songe in hys wyse
The moste solempne seruyse

Be hote, that euer man I trowe
Had herde, for some of hem longe lowe
Some lygh, and all of one accorde.
To tell shortly at a worde
was neuer herde so swete steuen
But it had be a thynge of heuen
So mery a sowne, so swete entunes
That certes for the townе of Tewnes
I nolde, but I had herde hem synge
For all my chambre gan to ryngе
Through syngynge of her armony
For instrument, nor melody
was no where herde, yet halfe so swete
Nor of acorde halfe so mete
For there was none of hem that fayned
To synge, for eche of hem hym payned
To fynde out many crafty notes
They ne spared not her throtes
And soth to sayne, my chambre was
Full well depaynted, and with glas
were all the wyndowes, well yglased
Full clere, and not an hole yraased
That to beholde it was great ioy
For holly all the storye of Troy
was in the glasynge ywrought thus
Of Hector, and of kynge Priamus
Of Achylles, and of kynge Laomedon
And eke of Medea, and of Jason
Of Paris, Helayne, and of Lauyne
And all the walles with colours fyne
were paynte, both verte and glose
And all the Romaunce of the rose
My wyndowes were shyt echone
And through the glasse the sunne shone
Upon my bedde with bryght bemes
with many glad gyldy stremes
And eke the welkyn was so fayre
Blewe, bryght, clere was the ayre
And full attempre, for soth it was
For neyther to colde, ne hote it nas
Ne in all the welkyn was no clowde
And as I lay thus wonder lowde
Me thought I herde an hunte blowe
Tassay hys great horne, and for to knowe
whether it was clere, or horse of sowne
And I herde goynge both vp and downe
Men horse, houndes, and other thynge
And all men speake of hunтynge
Howe they wolde slee the herte with strength
And howe the herte had vpon length
So moche endured, I not nowe what
Anone right when I herde that
Howe that they woldе, on huntynge gone
I was right glad, and vp anone
Toke my horse, and forth I wente
Out of my chambre, I neuer stente
Tyll I come to the felde without
There ouer toke I a great route
Of hunters, and eke of foresters
And many relayes and lymers
And hyed hem to the forest fast
And I with hem, so at the last
I asked one ladde, a lymere
Say felowe, who shall hunte here
(Quod I) and he answered ayen
Syr, the Emperour Octauien
(Quod he) and is here fast by
A goddes halfe, in good tyme (quod I)
Go we fast, and gan to ryde
when we come to the forest syde
Euery man dyd right sone
As to huntynge fell to done
The maister hunte, anone fote hote
with his horne blewe three mote
At the vncouplynge of hys houndes
within a whyle the herte founde is
Thalowed, and rechased fast
Longe tyme, and so at the last
This herte rused and stale awaye
Fro all the houndes a prety waye
The houndes had ouershot hym all
And were vpon a defaute yfall.
Therwith the hunte, wonder faste
Blewe a forloyne as the laste
I was go walked fro my tre
And as I wente, there came by me
A whelpe, that fawned me as I stoode
That had yfolowed, and coude no good
It came and crepte to me as lowe
Right as it had me yknowe
Helde downe hys herde, and louyed hys eres
And layde all smoth downe hys heres
I wolde haue caught it anone
It fledde, and was fro me gone
As I hym folowed, and it forth wente
Downe by a floury grene it wente
Full thycke of grasse, full softe and swete
with floures fele, fayre vnder fete
And lyteil vsed, it semed thus
For both Flora, and zepherus
They two, that make floures growe
Had made her dwellynge there I trowe
For it was on to beholde
As though the erthe enuye wolde

To

To be gayer then the heuen
To haue mo floures, fuche feuen
Is in the welken ſterres be
It had forget the powerte
That wynter, through hys colde mowes
Had made it ſuffre, and hys ſorowes
All was forgeten, and that was ſene
For all the woode was worn grene
Of wetneſſe of dewe, had made it ware
It is no nede eke for to are
where there were many grene greues
Of thycke of trees, ſo full of leues
And euery tree ſtode by hym ſelue
Fro other, well ten foote or twelue
So great trees, ſo huge of ſtrength
Of fourty or fyfty fedome length
Cleane wythout bowe or ſtycke
wyth croppes brode, and eke as thycke
They were not an ynche a ſonder
That it was ſhadde ouer all vnder
And many an harte, and many an hynde
was both before me, and behynde
Of fawnes, ſowers, buckes, does
was full of the wodde, and many roes
And many ſquyrels, that ſete
full hygh vpon the trees and ete
And in her maner made feeſtes
Shortly, it was ſo full of beeſtes
That though Argus, the noble countour
Shuld to reken in hys countour
And reken wyth hys fygures ten
For by tho fygures newe al ken
Yf they be crafty, reken and nombre
And tell of euery thynge the nombre
Yet ſhulde he fayle to reken euen
The wonders me met in my ſweuen
But forth I romed, right wonder faſte
Down we the wodde, ſo at the laſte
I was ware of a man in blacke
That ſate, and had yturned hys backe
To an ooke, an huge tree
Lorde thought I, who maye that be
what eyleth hym to ſytten here
Anone right, I went nere
Then fonde I ſytte, euen vpright
I wonder welfarynge knyght
By the maner me thought ſo
Of good moſell, and right ponge therto
Of the age of foure and twenty yere
Upon hys berde, but lyttell heere
And he was clothed all in blacke
I ſtalked euen vnto hys backe
And there I ſtode, as ſtyll as ought
The ſothe to ſay, he ſawe me nought
For why he hynge hys heed adowne
And with a deedly, ſorouful ſowne
He made of ryme, ten verſes or twelue
Of a complaynt, to him ſelue
The moſte pyte, the moſte routhe
That euer I herde, for by my trouthe
It was great wonder that nature
Wyght ſuffre any creature
To haue ſuche ſorowe, and he not deed
Ful pytous pale, and nothyng reed
He ſayd a laye a maner ſonge
without note, without ſonge
And was this, for ful wel I can
Reherſe it, right thus it began
I haue of ſorowe ſo great wone
That ioye gette I neuer none
Nowe that I ſe my lady bright
whiche I haue loued, withal my myght
Is fro me deed, and is agone
And thus in ſorowe, lefte me alone
Alas, deth what ayleth the
That thou noldeſt haue taken me
when that thou toke my lady ſwete
Of all goodneſſe, ſhe had none mete
That was ſo fayre, ſo freſhe, ſo free
So good, that men maye well ſe
when he had made thus hys complaynte
Hys ſorowfull herte, gan faſt fayntе
And hys ſpirites weren dede
The bloode was fledde, for pure drede
Downe to hys herte, to maken hym warme
For well it feled the herte had harme
To were eke, why it was adradde
By kynde, and for to make it gladde
For it is membre principall
Of the body, and that made all
Hys hewe chaunge, and were grene
And pale, for there no bloode is ſene
In no maner lymme of hys
Anone therwyth, when I ſawe thys
He farde thus yuell, there he ſete
I wente and ſtode right at hys fete
And grette hym, but he ſpake nought
But argued wyth hys owne thought
And in hys wytte, diſputed faſte
why, and howe hys lyfe myght laſte
Hym thought hys ſorowes were ſo ſmerte
And lay ſo colde vpon hys herte
So through hys ſorowe, a holy thought
Made hym that he herde me nought

For

For he had welaye lofte hys mynde
Though Dan, that me clepeth god of kynde
were for hys forowes neuer so wrothe
But at the laft, to fayne ryght fothe
He was ware of me, howe I ftoode
Before hym, and dyd of my hoode
And had ygret hym, as I beft coude
Deuonayrly, and nothynge loude
He fayd, I praye the be not wrothe
I herde the not: to fayne the fothe
Ne I fawe the not, fyr truely
Ah good fyr, no force (quod I)
I am ryght forry, yf I haue ought
Dyftroubled you, out of your thought
Forgeue me, yf I haue myffe take
Yes, thamendes is lyght to make
(Quod he) for there lyeth none therto
There is nothynge myffayde, nor do
Lo howe goodly fpake thys knyght
As it had be another wyght
And made it neyther tough ne queynt
And I fawe that, and gan me aqueynt
wyth hym, and founde hym fo treetable
Ryght wonder fkylfull, and reffonable
As me thought, for all hys bale
Anone ryght, I gan fynde a tale
To hym, to loke where I myght ought
Haue more knowlegynge of hys thought
Syr (quod I) thys game is done
I holde that thys herte be gone
Thefe hunters can hym no where fe
I do no force therof (quod he)
Why thought is theron neuer a dele
By our lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele
Ryght fo me thynketh by your chere
But fyr, o thynge woll ye here
Me thynketh in great forowe I you fe
But certes fyr, yf that ye
wolde ought dyfcure me your wo
I wolde, as wyfe god helpe me fo
Amende it, yf I can or may
Ye mowe proue it by affay
For by my trouth, to make you hole
I woll do all my power hole
And tellieth me, of your forowes fmerte
Paraunter it maye eafe your herte
That femeth full fyche vnder your fyde
wyth that he loked on me a fyde
As who fayeth nay, that wyll not be
Graunt mercy good frende (quod he)
I thanke the, that thou woldeft fo
But it maye neuer the rather be do
No man may my forowe glade
That maketh my hewe to fall and fade
And hath myne vnderftandynge lorne
That me is wo, that I was borne
Nay nought make my forowes flyde
Not all the remedyes of Ouide
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye
Ne Dedalus, wyth hys playes flye
Ne heale me, may no phifician
Naught Ipocras, ne Galien
Me is wo, that I lyue houres twelue
But who fo woll aflaye hym felue
whether hys herte can haue pyte
Of any forowe, let hym fe me
I wretch, that death hath made all naked
Of all the blyffe that euer was maked
I wroth, werfte of all wyghtes
That hate my dayes, and my nyghtes
Why lyfe, my luftes, be me lothe
For all fare and I be wrothe
The pure death is fo full my fo
That I wolde dye, it wyll not fo
For when I folowe it, it wyll flye
I wolde haue hym, it nyl nat me
Thys is payne wythout reed
Alwaye dreinge, and be not deed
That Tefyphus that lyeth in hell
Kaye not of more forowe tell
And who fo wyfe all, by my trouthe
Why forowe, but he had routhe
And pyte of my forowes fmerte
That man hath a fendly herte
For who fo feeth me fyll on morowe
Kaye fayne he hath mette wyth forowe
For I am forowe, and forowe is I
Alas, and I wyll tell the why
Why forowe is turned to playenge
And all my laughter to weepynge
Why glad thoughtes to heuynelle
In trauayle is myne ydlenelle
And eke my refte, my wele is wo
Why good is harme, and euer wo
In wrath is turned my playenyng
And my delyte in to forowyng
Myne heale is turned in to ficknelle
In drede is al my ffhernelle
To derke is turned al my lyght
Why wytte is foly, my day is nyght
Why loue is hate, my flepe wakyng
Why myrthe and melis, is faftyng
Why countenaunce is myerte
And al abawed, where fo I be

Why

My peace pleadynge, and in werre
Alas, howe myght I fare werre
My boldnesse is turned to shame
For false fortune hath played a game
At the Chesse with me, alas the whyle
The trayteresse false, and full of gyle
That all behoteth, and nothynge haite
She goeth vpryght, and yet she haite
That baggeth foule, and loketh fayre
The dyspytous debonayre
That scorneth many a creature
In ydole of false purtrayture
Is she, for she woll sone wryen
She is the monstres heed ywryen
Is frithe, ouer ystrowed with floures
Her moste worshyp and her floures
To lyen, for that is her nature
Without fayth, lawe, or mesure
She false is, and euer laughynge
With one eye, and that other weppynge
That is brought vp, she set all downe
I lyken her to the Scorpiowne
That is a false flatterynge beest
For with his heed he maketh feest
But all amyd his flatterynge
With his tayle he will stynge
And enuenym, and so will she
She is the enuyous charite
That is aye false, and semeth wele
So turneth she her false whele
About, for it is nothynge stable
Nowe by the fyre, nowe at table
Ful many one hath she thus ybrent
She is playe of enchauntement
That semeth one, and is not so
The false theefe, what hath she do
Crowest thou, by our lorde I will the say
At the Chesse with me she gan to play
With her false draughtes full dyuers
She stale on me, and toke my feers
And when I sawe my feers away
Alas, I couth no lenger play
But sayd, farewell sweete yfwys
And farewell all that euer there is
Therwyth fortune sayd, checke here
And mate in the mydde poynt of the checkere
With a paune errant, &c.
Full craftyer to playe she was
Then Arbalus that made the game
Fyrst of the Chesse, so was his name
But god wolde I had ons or twyse
Iconde, and knowe the ieoperdyse
That coude the Greke Pithagores
I shulde haue playde the bet at ches
And kepte my feers the bet therby
And though wherto, for truely
I holde that wysshe not worth a fire
It had be neuer the bet for me
For fortune can so many a wyle
There be but fewe, can her begyle
And eke she is the lasse to blame
My selfe I wolde haue do the same
Before god, had I ben as she
She ought the more excused be
For this I say, yet more therto
Had I be god, and myght haue do
My will, when she me feers caught
I wolde haue drawe the same draught
For also wyse, god yeue me rest
I dare well swere, she toke the best
But through that draught I haue lorne
My blysse, alas that I was borne
For euermore I trowe truely
For all my will, my lust holy
Is tourned, but ye, what to done
By our lorde it is to dye sone
For nothynge I leaue it nought
But lyue and dye, ryght in this thought
For there nys planet in fyrmament
Ne in ayre ne in earth none element
That they ne yeue me a yefte echone
Of weppynge when I am alone
For when that I aduyse me wele
And bethynke me euery dele
Howe that there lyeth in reckenynge
In my sorowe for nothynge
And howe there lyueth no gladnesse
May glad me of my dystresse
And howe I haue lost suffysaunce
And therto I haue no pleasaunce
Then maye I saye, I haue ryght nought
And when all this falleth in my thought
Alas, then am I ouercome
For that is done, is not to come
I haue more sorowe then Tantale
And when I herde hym tell this tale
Thus pytously as I you tell
Vnneth myght I lenger dwell
It dyd myne herte so moche wo
A good syr (quod I) say not so
Haue some pyte on your nature
That formed you to creature
Remembreth you of Socrates
For he ne counteth not thre strees

Of

Of nought that fortune coude do
No (quod he) I can not so
why so good syr, yes perde (quod I)
Me thynke not so, for truly
Though ye had lost the feerres twelue
And ye for sorowe murdred your selue
Ye shulde be dampned in thys case
By as good ryght as Medea was
That slough her chyldren for Jason
And Phyllis also, for Demophon
Hynge her selfe, so welaway
For he had broke hys terme day
To come to her: Another rage
Had Dido, the quene eke of Cartage
That slough her selfe, for Eneas
was false, wherby a foole she was.
And Ecquo dyed, for Narcisus
Nolde not loue her, and ryght thus
Hath many another foly done
And for Dalida dyed Sampson
That slough hym selfe wyth a pylere
But there is no man alyue here
wolde for her feers make thys wo
why so (quod he) it is not so
Thou wotest full lytell what thou menest
I haue lost more then thou wenest
Howe that maye be (quod I)
Good syr, tell me all holy
In what wyse, howe, why, and wherfore
That ye haue thus your blysse lore
Blythely (quod he) come syt doun
I tell the vpon a condicioun
That thou shalt holly wyth all thy wyt
Do thyne entente to herken it
yes syr: & were thy trouth therto
Gladly do then holde here to
I shall ryght blythly, so god me saue
Holly wyth all the wyt I haue
here you as well as I can
A goddes halfe (quod he) and began
Syr (quod he) syth fyrst I couthe
Haue any maner wyt fro youth
Or kyndely vnderstandynge
To comprehende in any thynge
what loue was, in myne owne wyt
Yet dedelesse I haue euer yet
Be tributary, and pryue trente
To loue holly, wyth good entente
And through pleasaunce, become hys thrall
wyth good wyll, body, herte and all
All thys I put in hys seruage
As to my lorde, and dyd homage
And full demoutly I prayde hym to
He shulde helpe myne herte so
That it pleasaunce to hym were
And worshyp to my lady dere
And thys was longe, and many a yere
(Er that myne herte was set elsewhere)
That I dyd thus, and wyste why
I trowe it came me kyndely
Paraunter I was therto moste able
As a whyte wall, or a table
For it is redy to ketche and take
All that men wyll therin make
whether so men woll portrey or paynte
Be the werkes newer so quaynte.
And thylke tyme I fared ryght so
I was able to haue lerned tho
And to haue conde as well or better
Paraunter, eyther arte or letter
But for loue came fyrst in my thought
Therfore I forgate it nought
I chees loue to my fyrst craft
Therfore it is wyth me laft
For why, I toke it of so yonge age
That malyce had my corage
Not that tyme, turned to no thynge
Through to moche knowlegynge
For that tyme, youth my maystresse
Gouerned me in ydelnesse
For it was in my fyrst youthe
And tho full lytell good I couthe
For al my werkes were flyttyng
That tyme, and al my thought varyeng
Al were to me lyche goode
That I knewe tho, but thus it stode
It happed that I came on a day
In to a place, there that I sey
Trewly the fayrest companye
Of ladyes, that euer man with eye
Had sene togyther in o place
Shal I clepe it happe, eyther grace
That brought me there, not but fortune
That is to lyen ful commune
The false trayterresse perverse
God wolde I couthe clepe her werse
For nowe she wayteth me ful wo
And I wot tel some wyll so
Among these ladyes thus echone
Hoth to sayne, I sawe one
That was lyke none of the route
For I dare swere, without doute
That as the sonnes sunne bryght
Is fayrer, clerer, and hath more lyght

Then

Than any other planet in heuen
The mone, or the sterres seuen
For all the worlde, so had she
Surmounted hem al of beautie
Of maner, and of comlynesse
Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse
Of goodlyhede, and so wel besey
Shortly what shal I more sey
By god and by his halowes twelue
It was my swete, eyght all her selue
She had so stedfast countenaunce
So noble porte, and mayntenaunce
And loue that wel herde my bone
Had espyed me thus sone
That she full sone in my thought
As helpe me god, so was I cought
So sodaynly, that I ne toke
No maner counsayle, but at her loke
And at myne herte, for why, her eyen
So gladly I trowe myne hert seyne
That purely tho, myne owne thought
Sayd it were better serue her for nought
Than with an other to be wele
And it was soth, for euery dele
I wyll anon eyght tell the why
I sawe her daunce so comely
Carol and synge so swetely
Laugh and playe so womanly
And loke so debonayrly
So goodly speke and so frendly
That certes I trowe that neuer more
Was sene so blyssful a tresore
For euery hert on her herd
Soth to sayg it was not reed
Neyther yelowe, ne brouwne it nas
Me thought most lyke golde it was
And whych eyen my lady had
Debonayre, good, glad, and sad
Symple, of good mokell, not to wyde
Therto her loke nas nat asyde
Ne ouerthwart, but beset so wele
It drewe and toke vp euery dele
All that on her gan beholde
Her eyen semed anon she wolde
Haue mercy, tolly wenden so
But it was neuer the rather do
It nas no counterfeted thynge
It was her owne pure lokyng
That the goddesse dame nature
Had made hem open by measure
And close, for were she neuer so glad
Her lokyng was not tolyche sprad
Ne wyldly, though that she played
But euer me thought her eyen sayde
By god my wrath is all forgeue
Therwith her lyst so wel to lyue
That dulnesse was of her adrad
She nas to sobre ne to glad
In all thynges more measure
Had neuer I trowe creature
But many one with her loke she hert
And that sate her full lytle at herte
For she knewe nothyng of her thought
But whether she knewe or knewe it nought
Algate she ne rought of hym a stre
To get her loue no nere nas he
That wõned at home, than he in Inde
The formost was alway behynde
But good folke ouer all other
She loued as man may do his brother
Of which loue she was wondre large
In sayfful places that here charge
But wyth a vysage had she therto
Alas my hert is wondre wo
That I ne can descryuen it
Me lacketh both englysh and wyt
For to vndo it at the full
And eke my spyrites ben so dull
So great a thyng for to deuyse
I haue no wyt that can suffyse
To comprehende her beauti
But thus moche I dare sayne that she
was whyte, rodye, fresh, and lyuely hewed
And euery daye her beautie newed
And nygh her face was alderbest
For certes nature had suche lest
To make that fayre, that truly she
was her chefe patron of beautie
And chefe ensample of all her werke
And mouster, for be it neuer so darke
Me thynketh I se her euermo
And yet moreouer though al tho
That euer lyued, were now alyue
Ne wolde haue founde to discryue
In al her face, a wicked sygne
For it was sad, symple, and benigne
And suche a goodly swete speche
Had that swete, my lyues leche
So frendly, and so well ygrounded
Upon al reason so well yfounded
And so tretable to all good
That I dare sweare well by the rood
Of eloquence was neuer founde
So swete a sowning sacounde

Ne trewer tonged, ne stormed lasse
Ne bet couldе heale: That by the masse
I durst sweare, though the pope it songe
That there was neuer yet through her tóg
Man ne woman greatly harmyd
As for her was all harme hyd
Ne lasse flattryng in her worde
That purely her symple recorde
was founde as true as any bonde
Or trouth, of any mans honde
Ne chyde she couldе neuer a dele
That knoweth all the worlde ful wele
But suche a fayrnesse of a necke
Had that swete, that bone nor brecke
Nas there none sene, that myslat
It was whyte, smothe, streyght, a pure flat
without hole, or caneil bone
And by semyng she had none
Her throte, as I haue now memoire
Semed as a rounde tour of yuoire
Of good greatnesse, and not to grete
And fayre whyte she hete
That was my ladyes name ryght
She was therto fayre and bryght
She had not her name wronge
Ryght fayre shulders, and body longe
She had, and armes euery lyth
Fattysh flesshy, not great ther with
Ryght whyte handes, and nayles red
Rounde brestes, and of good brede
Her hyppes were: a streyght flat backe
I knewe on her none other lacke
That all her lymmes were pure sewyng
In as ferre as I had knowyng
Therto she couldе so wel playe
what that her lyst, that I dare saye
That was lyke to forthe bryght
That euery man maye take of lyght
Ynough, and it hath neuer the lesse
Of manet and of comlynesse
Ryght so farde my lady dere
For euery wyght of her manere
Wyght rasche ynough, yf that he wolde
yf he had eyen her to beholde
For I dare sweare wel, yf that she
Had amonge ten thousande be
She wolde haue be at the best
I chese myselfe of all the fyrst
Though they had stonde in a rowe
To mens eyen, that couldе haue knowe
For where so men had played, or waked
He thought the felowshyp as naked
without her, that I sawe ones
As a crowne without stones
Truly she was to myne eye
The soleyn Fenix of Arabye
For there lyueth neuer but one
Ne suche as she, ne knowe I none
To speke of goodnesse, truly she
Had as moche debonayrtie
As euer had Hester in the Bybie
And more, yf more were possyble
And soth to sayne, therwithall
She had a wyt so generall
So hole enclyned to all good
That all her wyt was set by the roode
without malyce, vpon gladnesse
And therto I sawe neuer yet a lesse
Harmfull, than she was in doing
I say not that she ne had knowyng
what harme was, or els she
Had couldе no good, so thynketh me
And truly for to speke of trouth
But she had had, it had be routh
Therof she had so moche her dele
And I dare sayne, and sweare it wele
That trouth hym selfe ouer all and all
Had chose his manet principall
In her, that was his restyng place
Therto she had the moost grace
To haue stedfast perseuerannce
And easye attemptе gouernaunce
That euer I knewe, or wyst yet
So pure suffraunt was her wyt
And reason gladly she vnderstode
It followed well, she couldе good
She vsed gladly to do wele
These were her manets euery dele
Therwith she loued so well ryght
She wronge do wolde to no wyght
No wyght myght do her no shame
She loued so wel her owne name
Her lust to holde no wyght in honde
Ne be thou syker, she wolde not fonde
To holde no wyght in balaunce
By halfe worde, ne by countenaunce
But yf men wolde vpon her lye
Ne sende men into walakye
To Ruysse, and to Tartarie
To Iherusalem, ne into Turkye
And byd hym fast, anon that he
Go hoodelesse into the dyse see
And come home by the Carteuate
And syr, be now ryght ware

That

That I may of you here sayne
worthyp, or that ye come agayne
Shr ne vsed no suche knackes smale
But therfore that I tell my tale
Ryght on this same I haue sayde
was hooly all my loue layde
for certes she was that swete wyfe
My suffysaunce, my lust, my lyfe
Myne hope, myne heale, and all dyelle
My woldes welfare, and my goodelle
And I holy hers, and euerydele
By our lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele
hardly your loue was wel beset
I not how ye myght haue do bet
Bet, ne not so well (quod he)
I trowe syr (quod I) parde.
Nay leue it wel: Syr so do I
I leue you well, that truly
you thought that she was the best
And to beholde, the aldertayrest
whoso had loked her with your eyen
with myne, nay al that her seyen
Sayde and swore, it was so
And though they ne had, I wolde tho
Haue loued best my lady fre
Though I had had all the beautie
That euer had Alcybades
And all the strength of Hercules
And therto had the worthynelle
Of Alisaundre, and all the rychelle
That euer was in Babiloyne
In Cartage, or in Macedoyne
Or in Rome, or in Nynine
And therto also hardy be
As was Hector, so haue I ioye
That Achules slough at Troye
And therfore was he slayne also
In a temple, for both two
wer slayne, he and Antigelius
And so sayth Dares Frigius
For loue of Polixena
Or ben as wyse as Aymerus
I wolde euer, without drede
Haue loued her, for I must nede
Nede nay truly I gabbe nowe
Nought nede, and I woll tellen howe
For of good wyll myne hert it wolde
And eke to loue her, I was holde
As for the fayrest and the best
She was as good, so haue I rest
As euer was Penelope of Grece
Or as the noble wyse Lucrece
That was the best, he telleth thus
The Romayne Titus Liuius
She was as good, and nothyng lyke
Though her stories be autentyke
Algate she was as true as she
But wherfore that I tell the
whan I fyrst my ladye sey
I was tyght yonge, soth to say
And ful great nede I had to lerne
whan myne hert wolde yerne
To loue it was a great empryse
But as my wyt wolde best suffyse
After my yonge chyldly wyt
without drede I beset it
To loue her in my best wyse
To do her worthyp, and the servyse
That I coude tho, by my trouth
without faynyng, eyther slouth
For wonder fayne I wolde her se
So mokell it amended me
That whan I sawe her a morowe
I was warysshed of al my sorowe
Of alday after tyl it were eue
Ne thought nothyng myght me greue
were my sorowes neuer so smerte
And yet she syt so in myne herte
That by my trouth, I nolde nought
For al this worlde, out of my thought
Leaue my lady, no truly
Now by my trouth syr (quod I)
Me thynketh ye haue suche a chaunce
As shryft without repentaunce
Repentaunce, nay lye (quod he)
Shulde I nowe repent me
To loue, nay certes than were I well
werse than was Achitophel
Or Antenor, so haue I ioye
The traytour that betrayed Troye
Or the false Genelion
Ne that purchased the trayson
Of Roulande, and of Olyuere
Nay, whyle I am alyue here
I nyll forfet her neuer mo,
Now good syr (quod I) tho
ye haue well tolde me here before
It is no nede to reherse it more
How ye sawe her fyrst, and where
But wolde ye tel me the manere
To her, which was your fyrst speche
Therof I wolde you beseche
And howe she knewe fyrst your thought

whether ye loued her or nought
And telleth me eke what ye haue lore
I herde you tel here before
ye sayd, thou nost what thou menest
I haue lost more than thou wenest
what losse is that (quod I tho)
Nyl she not loue you as it so
Or haue ye aught done amys
That she hath lefte you, is it this
For goddes loue tel me al
Before god (quod he) and I shal
I say right as I haue sayde
On her was al me loue layd
And yet she nist it not neuer a dele
Not long tyme, leue it wele
For be right syker, I durst nought
For al this worlde, tel her my thought
Ne I wolde haue wrathed her truly
For woste thou why, she was lady
Of the body that had the herte
And whoso hath that may not asterte
But for to kepe me fro ydlenesse
Truly I dyd my busynesse
To make songes as I best coude
And oft tyme I songe hem loude
And made songes, this a great deale
Although I coude not make so wele
Songes, ne knewe the arte all
As coude Lamekes sonne Tubal
That founde out fyrst the arte of songe
For as his brothers hamers ronge
Upon his anuelt vp and downe
Therof he toke the fyrst sownne
But grekes sayne of Pithagoras
That he the fyrst fynder was
Of the arte, Aurora telleth so
But therof no force of hem two
Algates songes this I made
Of my felyng, myne herte to glade
And lo, this was aither fyrst
I not where it were the werst
Lorde it maketh myne herte lyght
whan I thynke on that swete wyght
That is so semely on to se
And wyth to god it myght so be
That she wolde holde me for her knyght
My lady that is so fayre and bryght
Now haue I tolde the, soth to say
My fyrst songe vpon a daye
I bethought me what wo
And sorowe that I suffred tho
For her, and yet she wyst it nought
Ne tel her durst I not my thought
Alas thought I, I can no rede
And but I tell her, I am but deed
And yf I tell her, to say ryght soth
I am adrad she woll be wroth
Alas, what shall I than do
In this debate, I was so wo
Me thought myne herte brast atwayne
So at the last, soth for to sayne
I bethought me that nature
Ne formed neuer in creature
So moche beautie truly
And bountie without mercy
In hope of that, my tale I tolde
with sorowe, as that I neuer sholde
For nedes, and maugre myne heed
I must haue tolde her, or be deed
I not well how that I began
Full euyll reherse it I can
And eke as helpe me god withall
I trowe it was in the dismal
That was the ten woundes of Egypt
For many a worde I ouer skypt
In my tale for pure fere
Lest my wordes mysse set were
with sorowfull hert and woundes deed
Softe and quakyng for pure drede
And shame, and stintyng in my tale
For ferde, and myne hewe all pale
Full oft I wext both pale and red
Bowyng to her I hynge the heed
I durst not ones loke her on
For wyt, maner, and all was gone
I sayd: mercy, and nomore
It nas no game, it sat me sore.
So at the last, soth to sayne
whan that myne herte was come agayne
To tell shortly al my spethe
with hole hert I gan her beseche
That she wolde be my lady swete
And swore, and hertely gan her hete
Euer to be stedfast and trewe
And loue her alway freshly newe
And neuer other lady haue
And all her worthyp for to saue
As I best coude, I swore her this
For yours is all that euer there is
For euermore myne herte swete
And neuer to false you, but I mete
I nyl, as wyse god helpe me so
And whan I had my tale ydo
God wot she accompted not a stre

Of

Of my tale, so thought me
To tell shortly, right as it is
Truly her answer it was this
I can not now wel counterfete
Her wordes, but this was the grete
Of her answer, she sayd nay
All verely, alas that daye
The sorowe I suffred and the wo
That truly Cassandra that so
Bewayled the destruction
Of Troye, and of Ilion
Had neuer suche sorwe as I tho
I durst nomore say thereto
For pure feare, but stale awaye
And thus I lyued full many a day
That truly I had no nede
Further than my beds herd
Neuer a day to seche sorowe
I founde it redy euery morowe
For why, I loued her in no gere
So it befell an other yere
I thought ones I wolde fonde
To do her knowe, and understonde
My wo, and she well understoode
That I ne wylled thynge but good
And worshyp, and to kepe her name
Ouer al thynges, and drede her shame
And was so busy her to serue
And pytie were I shulde sterue
Sith that I willed none harme ywys
So whan my lady knewe all this
My lady yaue me all holy
The noble yeft of her mercy
Sauyng her worshyp by al wayes
Nedlesse, I mene non other wayes
And ther with she yaue me a tynge
I trowe it was the fyrst thynge
But yf myne hert was ywarе
Glad, that it is no nede to axe
As helpe me god, I was as blyue
Raysed, as fro deth to lyue
Of al happes the alder best
The gladdest and the moost at rest
For truly that swete wyght
whan I had wronge, a she the right
She wolde alway so goodly
Forgeue me so debonayrly
In all my youth, in all chaunce
She toke me in her gouernaunce
Therwith she was alway so trewe
Our loye was euery lyche newe
Our hertes weren so euen a payre
That neuer nas that one contrayre
To that other, for no wo
For soth ilyche they suffred tho
O bylle and eke o sorowe both
Ilych they were both glad and wroth
Il was vs one without were
And thus we lyued ful many a yere
So well, I can not tell howe
Sir (quod I) where is she nowe
Now (quod he) and stynt anon
Therwith he wexe as deed as stone
And sayde alas that I was borne
That was the losse, that here before
I tolde the, that I had loste
Bethinke the, how I sayd here beforne
Thou wost ful lytle what thou menest
I haue lost more than thou wenest
God wot alas, right that was she
Alas syr howe, what may that be
She is deed: Nay: yes by my trouth
Is that your losse, by god it is routh.

And with that worde right anon
They gan to strake forth, all was done
For that tyme the hart huntyng
with that me thought that this kynge
Gan homewarde for to ryde
Vnto a place was there besyde
which was from vs but a lyte
A longe castell with walles whyte
By saynt John on a ryche hyll
As me mette, but thus it fyll
Right thus me met, as I you tell
Than in the castell there was a bell
As it had smyte houres twelue
Therwith I awoke my selue
And founde me lying in my bed
And the boke that I had red
Of Alcione and Seys the kynge
And of the goddes of slepyng
I founde it in myne honde full euen
Thought I, this is so queynt a sweuen
That I wolde by processe of tyme
Fonde, to put this sweuen in ryme
As I can best, and that anon
This was my sweuen, now it is done.

Explicit.

Mᵖ mayster. &c. whan of
Cupyde our kynge
was axed, what is
trouth or sothfastnesse
Ye not a worde answe-
red to that askynge
As who sayeth, no man
is all true I gesse
And therfore though I hyght to expresse
The sorowe and wo that is in maryage
I dare not wryten of it no wyckednesse
Lest I my selfe fall efte in suche dotage.

I woll not say how that it is the chayne
Of Saturnus, on whiche he gnaweth euer
But I dare sayne, were he out of his payne
As by his wyll, he wolde be bounden neuer
But thylke doted foole that eft hath leuer
Ychayned be, than out of prison crepe
God let hym neuer fro his wo disceuer
Ne no man hym bewayle, though he wepe.

But yet lest thou do wrong, take a wyfe
Bet is to wed, than brenne in worse wyse
But ȳ shalt haue sorow on thy flesh thy lyfe
And bē thy wyues tryal, as sayn these wise
And if that holy wrytte may not suffyse
Experience shall the teache, so may happe
Take the waye leuer to be take in fryse
Than efte to fall of weddynges the trappe.

This lytle wryt, prouerbes or fygures
I sende you, take kepe of it I rede
Unwyse is he, that can no wele endure
yf thou be syker, put the not in drede
The wyfe of Bathe I praye you ȳ ye rede
Of this mater that we haue on honde
God graunt you your lyfe freely to lede
In fredome, for foule is to be bonde.

Explicit.

The assemble of foules.

The lyfe so shorte, ȳ craft so longe to lerne
Thassaye so harde, so sharpe the conquering
The dredful ioy alway that flyt so yerne
All this mene I by loue that my felynge
Astonyeth with his wondrefull werkynge
So sore twys, that whan I on him thynke
Nought wot I wel, whether I flete or synke

For al be that I knowe not loue in dede
Ne wot how that he quyteth folke hyre
yet happeth me full oft in bokes rede
Of his myracles, and of his cruell yre
There rede I well, he wol be lorde and syre
I dare not sayne, his strokes be sore
But god saue suche a lorde, I can no more

Of usage, what for lust, and what for lore
On bokes rede I oft, as I you tolde
But wherfore I spende all this, nought yore
Agone, it happed me to beholde
Upon a boke was ywryten with letters olde
And therupon a certayne thynge to lerne
The longe day ful fast I rad and yerne.

For out of olde feldes, as men sayth
Cōmeth al this newe corne fro yere to yere
And out of olde bokes, in good fayth
Cōmeth all this newe science that men lere
But now to purpose, as of this matere
To rede forth, it gan me so delyte
That al that day me thought it but lyte.

This boke of which I make mencyon
Entytled was ryght thus, as I shall tell
Tullius, of the dreame of Scipion
Chapiters seuen it had, of heauen and hell
And erth, and soules that therin dwel
Of which as shortly as I can it treate
Of his sentence, I woll you sayne the greate

Fyrst tellyth it, whan Scipion was come
In Affryke, how he metyth Massynysse
That

That hym for ioye, in armes hath ynome
Than telleth he her speche, and all the blysse
that was betwixe hem, tyll ꝑ day gan mysse
And how hys auncestre Affrykan so dere
Gan in his slepe that nyght tyll hym apere

Than telleth it, that from a sterry place
how affrikan hath hym Cartage shewed
And warned hym before, of al hys grace
And sayd hym what man, lered eyther lewde
That loueth comune profyte, wel ytheude
he shulde into a blysful place wende
There as the ioye is wythouten any ende

Than asked he, yf folke that here bene dede
haue lyfe, and dwellyng in another place
And Affrikan sayd yee, without any drede
And how our present lyues space
ment but a maner deth, what way we trace
And ryghtful folke, shul gone after they dye
To heauen, and shewed hym the Galarie

Than shewed he him, the lytle erth ꝑ here is
To regarde of the heuens quantyte
And after shewed he hym the nyne speris
And after that the melodye herde he
That cometh of thylke speres thryse thre
That welles of musyke bene, and melodye
In thys worlde here, and cause of armonye

Than sayd he hym, sens erth was so lyte
And ful of turment, and of harde grace
That he ne shulde him in this worlde delyte
That tolde he hym, in certayne peres space
That euery sterre, shuld come into his place
Ther it was first, and al shuld out of minde
That in thys worlde is done, of al mánkinde

Than prayed hym Scipion, to tel hym al
The waye to come into that heuen blysse
And he sayd: fyrst know thy selfe immortal
And loke aye besely, that thou werch & wisse
To comune profite, and thou shalt not misse
To come swyftly, vnto that place dere
That full of blysse is, and of soules clere

And brekers of the lawe, sothe to sayne
And ydolatres folke, after that they ben dede
Shul whirle about ꝑ world alway in payne
Tyl many a worlde be passed, out of drede
And than forgeuen al her wycked dede
than shullen they come, to that blysful place
To whych to comen, God sende the grace

The day gan faylen, and the derke nyght
That reueth bestes from her besynesse
Berafte me my boke for lacke of lyght
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse
Fulfylled of thought, and besy heuynesse
For both I had thyng, which that I nolde
And eke I ne had that thyng that I wolde

But fynally my spyrite at laste
For wery of my labour al that daye
Toke reste, that made me to slepe faste
And in my slepe I mette, as that I laye
how Affrikan, ryght in the selfe araye
That Scipion hym sawe, before that tyde
was come, & stode ryght at my beddes syde

The wery hunter: slepyng in hys bedde
To wodde ayen hys mynde goth anone
The iuge dremeth, how hys plees be spredde
The carter dremeth, howe his cartes gone
the rych of golde, ꝑ knight fyght wt his fone
The sycke mette he drynketh of the tonne
The louer met, he hath hys lady wonne

Can I not sayne, yf that the cause were
For I had radde of affrikan before
That made me to mete that he stode there
but thus sayd he: thou hast the so wel borne
In lokynge of myne olde boke al to torne
Of whych Macrobie rought not a lyte
That somdele of thy labour wolde I quyte

Citherea, thou blysful lady swete
That wt thy fyre blinde, daunteste whá ꝑ lest
That madest me thys swouen for to mete
be thou my helpe in this, for thou maist best
As wysely as I seygh the north north west
whan I began my swouen for to wryte
So yeue me myght, to ryme it and endyte

This forsayde Affrikan me hente anone
And forth with him to a gate brought
Ryght of a parke, walled wyth grene stone
and ouer ꝑ gate, with letters large ywrost
There were verse ywritten, as me thought
On eyther halfe, of full great difference
of which I shal you say, the playne sentence

Through me men gone into ꝑ blysful place
Of hertes heale, and deedly woundes cure

Through me men gon into the wel of grace
There grene & lusty May, shall euer endure
Thys is the waye to all good auenture
Be glad thou creder, and thy sorowe of cast
Al open am I, passe in and spede the fast

Through me me gon, thus spake that other syde
Unto the mortal strokes of the speere
Of which disdayne & daunger is the gyde
There neuer tree shall frute, ne leaues beere
This streme you ledeth to the sorowful weere
There as the sythe in ydlon is all dye
The eschewyng is onely the remedye

These verses of gold & asure ywritten were
Of whych I gan, astonyed to beholde
For with that one, encreased al my feare
And with that other gan my herte to bolde
That one me hette, that other dyd me colde
No wytte had I, for errour for to chese
To entre or flye, or me to saue or lese

Right as betweene Adamantes two
Of euyn weyght, a pece of yron set
Ne hath no myght to moue to ne fro
For what that one may hale, that other let
So fared I, that I nyst where me was bet
To entre or leaue, tyl Affrikan my gyde
Me hente and shoue in, at the gates wyde

And sayd, it standeth writen in thy face
Thyne errour, though thou tell it not me
But drede the not, to come into thys place
For thys writyng is nothinge ment by the
Ne by none, but he loues seruaunte be
For thou of loue, hast lost thy tast I gesse
As sycke man hath, of swete and bytternesse

But nathelesse, although thou be dul
That thou canst not do, yet mayst thou se
For many a man, that may not stande a pul
Yet lyketh it hym, at the wrestlyng for to be
And demeth yet, whether he do bet, or he
And yf thou haddest conning for tendyte
I shal the shewe matter of to wryte

And wyth y my hande in hys he toke anone
Of whych I comfort caught, & went in fast
But lorde so I was glad, and wel begon
For euer al, where I myne eyen cast
Were trees clad wyth leues y aye shall last
Eche in hys kynde, of colour fresh & grene
As Emerande, that ioye it was to sene

The pylder Oke, and eke the hardy ashe
The pyler elme, the coffer vnto carayne
The bore pype tre, boxme to whyppes lashe
The layrynge fyre, y cypres deth to playne
The shoter ewe, the aspe for shaftes playne
The Olyue of peace, and eke y dronken vine
The victor Palme, the laurer to dyuyne

A gardeyne saw I, full of blosomed bowis
Upon a ryuer, in a grene mede
There as swetnesse, euermore ynough is
Wyth floures whyte, blew, yelow, and rede
And colde wel stremes, nothynge drede
That swemmen ful of smal fysshes lyght
Wyth fynnes rede, and scales syluer bryght

On euery bough the brydes herde I synge
With voyce of aungel, in her armony
That dyd her dyne, her brydes forth to bringe
The lytle pety conyes, to her playe gan hy
And further al aboute, I gan espy
The dredeful Roe, y buche, the hart, & hynde
Squyrels, & bestes small of gentry kynde

Of instrumentes, of stringes in accorde
Herde I so playe, a ryght swetnesse
That God, that maker is of al and lorde
Ne herde neuer better, as I gesse
Ther wyth a wynde, vnneth it myght be lesse
Made in the leaues grene, a noyse softe
Accordaunt to the foules songe on loft

The ayre of the place, so attempre was
That neuer was there grefaunce of hote ne colde
There was eke euery holsome spyce & gras
Ne no man may there wate sycke ne elde
yet was there more ioy a thousande folde
Than I can tell, or euer coude or myght
There is euer clere day, and neuer nyght

Under a tree, beside a well I sey
Cupyde our lorde, his arowes forge & file
And at hys fete, hys bowe al redy ley
And wel his doughter tempred al the while
The heedes in the wel, with her wyle
She couched hem after, as they shuld serue
Some to slee, & some to wounde and carue

Tho was I ware of pleasaunce anone right
And of aray, lust, beaute, and curtesy

And

And of the crafte, that can & hath the myght
To done before, a wyght to done foly
Disfygured was she, I wyl not lye
And by hym selfe, vnder an oke I gesse
Saw I deuyse, that stode wyth gentylnesse

Than sawe I beaute, wyth a nyce atyre
And youth ful of game and tolyte
Foleharderiesse, flatery, and desyre
Bellagery, mede, and other trye
Her names shal not here be tolde for me
And vpon pyllers great of Jasper longe
I saw a temple of brasse yfounded stronge

And aboute the temple, daunced alway
women ynowe, of whych some there were
Fayre of hem selfe, & some of hem were gay
In kyrtyls al dysheueled went they there
That was theyr offyce euer, fro yere to yere
And on the temple, sawe I whyte and fayre
Of dowues sitting, many a thousand payre

And before the temple dore ful soberly
Dame peace sate, a curteyne in her honde
And her besyde, wonder dyscretly
Dame Pacience syttynge there I founde
wyth face pale, vpon an hyl of sonde
And alther nerre, wythin and wythout
Behedl and arte, and of her folke a rout

wythin the temple, of syghes hote as fyre
I harde a swough, that gan aboute ren
whych syghes were engendred wyth desyre
That made euery herte for to brenn
Of newe flambe, and wel espyed I then
That al the cause of sorowes, þ they dyde
Come of the bytter goddes ialousye

The god Priapus, sawe I as I went
wythin the temple, in soueraine place stonde
In such arraye, as whan the asse hym shent
with crye by nyght, and with sceptre in honde
Ful busely men gan assay and sonde
Upon hys heed to sette of sondry hewe
Garlandes, ful of freshe floures newe

And in a preuy corner, in dispoite
founde I Venus, and her porter Rychesse
That was ful noble, and hauten of her port
Derke was that place, but after lyghtnesse
I sawe a lyte, vnnethes it myght be lesse
And on a bed of golde, she lay to rest
Tyll that the hote sunne gan to west

Her gylte heeres, wyth a golde threde
ybounde were, entrelled as she lay
And naked from the brest vnto the hede
Men myght her se, and sothly for to say
The remenaunt, couered wel to my pay
Ryght wyth a lytle kerchefe of valence
There was no thycker cloth of defence

The place gaue a thousande sauours sote
And Bacchus god of wyne, sate her besyde
And Ceres nexte, that doth of hunger bote
And as I sayd, a myddes lay Cupyde
To whom on knees, the ponge folkes cryed
To be theyr helpe, but thus I let her lye
And farther in the temple, I gan espye

That in despyte of Dyane the chaste
Ful many a bowe ybroke, hynge on the wal
Of maydens, such as gon her tymes waste
In her seruyce, and paynted ouer al
Of many a storye, of whyche I touche shall
A fewe, as of Calixte and Athalante
and many a maide, of which þ name I wot

Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules
Byblys, Dydo, Tysbe, and Piramus
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles
Helcyne, Cleopatre, and Troylus
Scylla, and eke the mother of Romulus
All these were paynted on that other syde
And al her loue, and in what plyte they dide

Whan I was comen aven into the place
That I of spake, that was so sote & grene
Forth walked I tho, my seluen to solace
Tho was I ware, where there sate a quene
That as of lyght, the somer sunne shene
Passeth the sterre, ryght so ouer measure
She fayrer was than any creature

And in a launde, vpon an hyl of floures
was sette this noble goddesse Nature
Of braunches were her halles & her boures
Iwrought, after her crafte and her mesure
Ne there nas foule, þ cometh of engendrure
That there ne were preest, in her presence
To take her dome, and yeue her audience

For thys was on saynt Valentynes daye
whan euery foule cometh to chese her make

Of

Of euery kynde, that men thynke may
And that so huge a noyse gan they make
That erth, see, and tree, and euery lake
So ful was, that vnneth there was space
For me to stande, so ful was al the place

And right as Alayne, in the playnt of kynde
Deuyseth Nature, of such aray and face
In such aray, men myght her there fynde
Thys noble Empryse ful of al grace
Bad euery foule to take her owne place
As they were wonte alway, fro yere to yere
On saynt Valentynes day, to standen there

That is to say, the foules of rayne
were hyghest set, and than the foules smale
That eaten, as that nature wolde enclyne
As wormes or thynge, of which I tel no tale
But water foule, sat lowest in the dale
& foules þ lyueth by sede sate on they grene
And that so many, that wonder was to sene

There myght men the royal Egle synde
That wyth his sharpe loke perseth the son
And other Egles, of a lower kynde
Of which that clerkes wel deuysen con
There was the tyrant with his fethers don
And grene, I mene þ gosshauke þ doth pyne
To byrdes, for hys outrageous rayne

The gentyl faucó, þ with his fete distreyneth
The kynges hande, the hardy sperhauke eke
The quales foe, the merlyon that preyneth
Hym selfe ful ofte, the larke for to seke
There was the doue, with her eyen meke
The ielous swan, ayenst his deth þ syngeth
The owle eke, that of deth the bode bryngeth

The crane, the geant, vb his trompes of wne
The theef the choughe, & the chatteryng pye
The scornyng Jaye þ Eles foe the heronne
The false lapwyng, ful of trecherye
The stare, that the counsayle can bewrye
The tame Ruddocke, and the cowarde kyte
The Cocke, that horologe is of thropes lyte

The sparow Venus son, & the nyghtyngale
That clepeth forth the fresh leaues newe
The swalowe murdrer of the flyes smale
That maken hony, of floures freshe of hewe
The wedded turtel, with his herte trewe
The pecocke, wyth his aungel fethers bryght
The fesaunt, scorner of the cocke by nyght

The waker gose, the cuckowe euer vnkynde
The popyngey, ful of delycasy
The drake stroyer of hys owne kynde
The storke, wreker of auoutry
The hote cormeraunt, ful of glotony
The rauyn & the crow with her voice of care
The throstle olde, and the frosty feldefare

what shulde I say, of foules of euery kynde
That in thys worlde haue fethers & stature
Men myght in that place assembled synde
Before that noble goddes of Nature
And echo of them dyd hys busy cure
Benignely to chese, or for to take
By her accorde, his formell or his make

But to the point, Nature held on her honde
A formal Egle, of shape the gentylest
That euer she amonge her workes fonde
The moost benigne, and eke the goodlyest
In her was euery vertue at his best
So farforth, that Nature her self had blysse
To loke on her, and ofte her becke to kysse

Nature, the vycar of the almyghty lorde
That hote, colde, heuy, lyght, moyst & dry
Hath knyt, by euen nombre of accorde
In easy boyte, began to speke and say
Foules take hede of my sentence I pray
& for your owne ease, in fordrug of your nede
As fast as I may speke, I wyl me spede

ye know wel, how on saint Valentines day
By my statute, & throughe my gouernaunce
ye do chese your makes, & after flye away
with hem, as I pricke you wyth pleasaunce
But natheles, as by ryghtful ordinaunce
May I not let, for al this worlde to wyn
But he that most worthyest is, shal begyn

The tercel Egle, as ye knowe ful wele
The foule royal, above you al in degre
The wyse & worthy the secrete trust as stele
The whych I haue formed, as ye may se
In euery parte as it best lyketh me
It nedeth not hys shappe you to deuyse
He shal fyrst chese and speken in hys gyse

And after hym by order shal ye chese
After your kynde euerych as you lyketh

And

And as your hap is, shal ye wynne or lese
But which of you, that loue moost entirely
God sende hym her, ꝑ soreest for hym sterueth
And there withal, the Tercel gan she cal
And sayd, my lorme the choyse is to the fal

But nathelesse, in thys condicion
Must be the choyse, of euerych that is here
That she agree to hys election
who so he be, that shulde bene her fere
Thys is our vsage alway, fro yere to yere
And who so may at this tyme haue his grace
In blysful tyme he came into thys place

With heed enclined, and with ful humble chere
Thys royal Tercell spake, and taryed nought
Unto my soueraine lady, and not my fere
I chose and chese, with wyl, herte, and thought
The formel on your hande, so well ywrought
Whose I am al, and euer wyl her serue
Do what her lust, to do me lyue or sterue

Beseechyng her of mercy, and of grace
As she that is my lady soueraine
Or let me dye, here present in thys place
For certes, longe may I not lyue in payne
For in my herte is couched euery vayne
Hauyng regarde onely to my trouth
By dere herte, haue on my wo some routh

And yf I be founde to her untrewe
Disobeysaunt, or wylful negligent
I vaunt our, or in proceste loue a newe
I pray to you thys be my iugement
That with these foules I be al to rent
That ylke daye, that she me euer fynde
Unto her untrue, or in my gylte unkynde

And syth that none loueth her so wel as I
Although she neuer of loue me behet
Yet ought she be myne, through her mercy
For other bonde, can I none on her knet
For werle nor wo, neuer shall I let
To serue her, how fare so that she wende
Say what you lyst, my tale is at an ende

Right as the freshe reed rose newe
Ayenst the sommer sunne coloured is
Right so for shame, al waxen gan she hewe
Of thys formel whan she herde al this
Neyther she answerde well, ne sayd amys
So sore abashed was she, tyl that nature
Said, doughter drede you not, I you assure

Another Tercel Egle spake anone
Of lower kynde, and sayd that shulde nat be
I loue her better than ye do, by sayut Jhon
Or at leest, I loue her as wel as ye
And lenger haue serued her in my degre
And yf she shulde haue loued for longe louing
To me alone had be the guerdonyng

I dare eke say, yf she me fynde false
Unkynde, iangler, or rebel in any wyse
Or iolous, do me hange by the halse
And but I beare me in her seruyse
As wel as my wyt can me suffyce
Fro poynt to poynt, her honour for to saue
Take she my lyfe, and al the good I haue

The thyrde tercel Egle answerde tho
Nowe syrs, ye se the lytle leyser here
For euery foule cryeth out to be ago
Forth wyth hys make, or with his lady dere
And eke Nature her selfe, ne wyl not here
For taryeng her, not halfe that I wolde sey
And but I spede, I muste for sorowe dey

Of longe seruyce, auaunt I me nothyng
But as possible is me to dye to daye
For wo, as he that hath be lang ysthyng
Thys twenty wynter, and wel it happen may
A man may serue better, and more to pay
In halfe a yere, although it were no more
Than some man doth, ꝑ hath serued ful yore

I ne say nat thys by me for I ne can
Do no seruyce, that may my lady please
But I dare say, I am her trewest man
As to my dome, and fayrest wo'de her plese
At shorte wordes, tyl that deth me cease
I wyl be hers, whether I wake or wynke
And trewe in al that herte may bethynke

Of al my lyfe, syth that day I was borne
So gentyl plee, in loue or other thyng
Ne herde neuer no man me before
who so that had leyser and conuyng
For to reherse theyr chere, and theyr spekyng
And from the morowe gan thys speche last
Tyl downwarde went the sune wonder fast

The noyse of foules for to be delyuerde
So loude range, haue done and let vs wende

That

That wel wende ‡ ꝓ wod had al to shiuerd
Come of they cryed, alas ye wyl bs shende
whā shal your cursed piedinge haue an ende
Howe shulde a iudge, eyther partye leue
For yee or nay, without any pleue

The goose, the ducke, and the cuckowe also
So cryed keke keke, cuckow queke queke hy
That through mine eares ꝓ noyse went tho
The goose said than, al this nys worth a flye
But I can shape herof a remedy
And wyl say my verdyte fayre & swythe
For water foule who so be wroth or blythe

And I for wormfoule, sayd ꝓ fole cuckow
For I wyll of myne owne authoute
for cōmon spede, take on me the charge now
For to delyuer bs, it is great charyte
Ye may abyde a whyle yet parde
(Quod the Turtel) yf it be your wyl
A wyght may speke, it were as good be styl

I am a sede foule, one the vnworthyest
That wote I wel, and leest of conning
But better it is, that a wyghtes tonge rest
Than entremete hym of such doynge
Of which he neyther rede can nor synge
And who so it doth, ful foule him self acloy
For office vncōmitted, oft anoyeth (eth

Nature whych that alway had an eare
To murmur of the leudnesse behinde (there
with laconde voice sayd, holde your tonges
And I shall sone, I hope a counsayle fynde
You for to delyuer, & fro thys noyse vnbinde
I charge, of euery flocke ye shal one cal
To say the verdyte of you foules al

Assented were, to thys conclusyon
The brydes al, and foules of rauyne
Haue chosen fyrst, by playne electyon
The Tercelet of the faucon to dyffyne
All her sentence, and as him lust to termyne
And to Nature, him they dyd present
And she accepteth him with glad entent

The tercelet sayd than, in this maniere
Ful herde it were, to preue it by reason
who loueth best, this gentyl formel here
For euerych hath such replication
that by skylles may none be brought adoun
I can not se, that arcumentes auayle
Than semeth it, there must be batayle

Al redy quod these Egles tarcelles tho
Nay syrs (quod he) yf that I durst it say
ye do me wronge, my tale is not ydo
For syrs, taketh nat agreue I pray
It may not be as ye wolde, in this way
Ours is ꝓ voice, ꝓ hath the charge in hande
And to the Juges dome, ye must stande

And therfore peace I saye, as to my wyt
We wolde thynke, he we that the worthyest
Of knyghthode, and lengest had vsed it
Moost of estate, of blode the gentyllest
were syttyng for her, yf that her lest
And of these thre, she wote her selfe I trow
which that he be, for it is lyght to know

The water foules, haue they⁹ herdes layd
Togyther, and of shorte auysement
whan euerych had hys verdyte sayd
They sayd sothly, al by one assent
Howe that the goos, with the laconde gent
That so deserueth, to pronounce our nede
Shal rede our tale, & prayed to god her spede

And for these water foules, who began
The goose to speke, and in her cakelynge
She sayd, peace nowe, take kepe euery man
& herken which a reason I shall forth bring
My wytte is sharpe, I loue no tarying
I say I rede him, tho he were my brother
But she wyll loue him, let hym loue another

Lo here a parfyte reason of a gose
(Quod the sperhauke) neuer mote she the
Lo, such a thyng it is to haue a tonge loose
Nowe parde foole, yet were it better for the
Haue holde thy peace, than shewe thy nicete
It lyeth not in his wyt, nor in his wyl
But sothly is sayd, a foole can not be styl

The laughter arose, of gentyl foules al
And right anone, the sede foules chosen had
The Turtel trewe, and gan her to hem cal
And prayed her to say, the soth sad
Of this mater, and asked what she rad
And she answerd, that playnly her entent
She wolde shewe, & sothly what she ment

Nay, god forbede a louer shulde chaunge
The Turtel sayd, & werre for shame all reed
Though

Though that hys lady, euermore be straige
Yet let hym serue her alwaye, tyll he be deed
Forsoth, I prayse not the goses reed
For tho she dyed, I woldo none other make
I wyll be hers, tyll that the death me take

Well yhourded (q the ducke) by my hat
That men shulde loue alway carsednesse
Who can a reason fynde, or wyt in that
Daunceth he mery, that is myrthlesse
Who shulde recke, of that is recheleſſe
Ye quicke yet (q the ducke) ful wel and fayre
There be mo fyshes in the fyre then a payre

Now fye churle (q the gentyl Tercelet)
Out of the dongehyl, came that worde aryght
Thou canst not se, whych thyng is wel beset
Thou farest by loue, as oules do by lyght
The day he blindeth, ful wel they se by nyght
Thy kynde is of so lowe wretchednesse
That what loue is, thou cast not se nor gesse

Tho gan the cuckowe put him forth in preace
For foule that eateth wormes, and sayd thyne
So I (q he) may haue my make in peace
I recche nought, howe longe that ye stryue
Let echo of hem be soleyn all her lyue
Thys is my rede, sens they may not accorde
Thys shorte lesson, nedeth not recorde

Ye, haue the glutton fylde hys paunche
Then are we well, sayd the Emerion
Thou murdrer of the heſugge, on the braſiche
That brought the forth, thou rufull glotton
Lyue thou soleyn, wormes corruption
For no force is, of lacke of thy nature
So lerde be thou, whyle the world may dure

Now peace (q Nature) I cõmaunde here
For I haue herde all your opinion
And in effecte, yet be we neuer the nere
But fynally, thys is my conclusion
That she her selfe shall haue her election
Of whom her lyst, who so be wroth or blyth
Him the she chese th, he shal her haue as swyth

For syth it may not here dyscussed be
Who loueth best, as sayd the Tercelet
Be wol I done this fauour to her, that she
Shal haue right him on whõ her hert is set
And he her, that hys herte hath on her knet
Thys iuge I Nature, for I may not lye
To none estate, I haue none other eye

But as for counsayle, for to chose a make
Yf I were reason, then wolde I
Counsayle you, the royall tercell take
Is sayd the tercelet, full shylfully
As for the gentyllest, and moste worthy
Whych I haue wrought so wel to my pleſãce
That to you it ought ben a sufficyaunce

Whych dredful boyce, the formel her answerde
My ryghtfull lady, goddesse of Nature
Soth is, that I am euer vnder your yerde
As is euerych other creature
And must be yours, whyle my lyfe may dure
And therfore graunt me my fyrst boone
And myne entẽt, you woll I say ryght soone

I graunt it you (q she) and ryght anone
Thys formel Egle spake in thys degre
Almyghty quene, vnto thys yere be done
I aske respyte for to auysen me
And after that to haue my choyce all fre
Thys all & some, that I wolde speke & sey
Ye get nomore, al though ye do me dey

I woll not serue Venus ne Cupide
Forsoth as yet, by no maner way
Nowe sens it may none other wayes betyde
(Quod Nature) here is no more to say
Then wolde I that thys foules were away
Echo wyth hys make, for tarryeng lõger here
And sayd hem thus, as ye shall after here

To you speke I, ye tercelets (q Nature)
Beth of good herte, and serueth all thre
A yere is not so longe to endure
And echo of you payne hym in hys degree
For to do well, for god wote quyte is she
For you thys yere, what after so befall
Thys entermes, is dressed for you all

And whẽ this werke brought was to an end
To euery foule, Nature yaue hys make
By euen accorde, and on her way they wende
And forde the blysse and ioye that they make
For ech of hem gan other in his wynges take
And wyth her neckes echo gan other wynde
Thãkyng alway, the noble goddesse of kynde

But fyrst were chosen foules for to synge
As yere by yere, was alway her vsaunce

To synge a roundell at her departynge
To do Nature honoure and pleasaunce
Thenne I trowe, assured was in Fraunce
The wordes were such, as ye may here fynde
The next vers, as I nowe haue in mynde

Qui bien ayme tarde oublie.

Now welcom somer, with thy sunnes soote
That haste thys wynter wethers ouershake
Saynt Valentyne, thou arte full hye on loote
whych dryuest away, the loge nyghtes blake
Thus synge smale foules for thy sake
well haue they cause for to gladen ofte
Venus eche of hem recouered hath hys make
Full blysful may they sing whe they awake.
And with the shoutynge whe her songe was do
That foules made, at her flyght away
I woke, and other bokes toke me to
To rede vpon, and yet I rede alway
I hope ywys to rede so some day
That I shall mete somthynge for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nyll not spare.

Explicit.

The Floure of Curtesy.

IN Feuerier, when ϸ frosty moone
was hoyed, full of ϸbebus fyry lyght
And that she gan to vnclose her streames soote
Saynt Valentyne, vpon thy blysfull nyght
Of dutye, when gladly euery wyght
And foules chese, to vnclyde her olde sorowe
Euerych hys make, vpon the next morowe

The same tyme, I herde a lerke synge
full lustely, agayne the morowe gray
Awake ye louers, out of your slombrynge
Thys glad morowe, in all the haste ye may
Some obseruaunce doth vnto thys day
Your choyse ayen of herte to renewe
In confyrmynge, for euer to be trewe

And ye that be of choysynge at your large
Thys lusty day, by custome of nature
Take vpon you the blysfull holy charge
To serue loue, whyle your lyfe may dure
with herte, body, and all your besy cure
For euermore, as Venus and Cipride
For you dyspoleth, and the god Cupyde

For loye owe we playnly to obey
Unto thys lordes myghty ordinaunce
And mercyfully rather for to dye
Then euer in you be founden variaunce
And though your lyfe be medled with greuaunce
And at your herte closet be your wounde
Beth alwaye one, there as ye are bounde

That when I had herde and lysted longe
with deuoute herte, the lusty melody
Of thys heuenly comfortable songe
So agreable, as by remembre
I rose anone, and taste gan me hye
Towarde a grour, and the waye take
Foules to sene, euerych chose hys make

And yet I was full thursty in languyshyng
Myne ague was so feruent in hys hete
when Eurora, for dery complaynyng
Can dyspyll her chrystall teeres wete
Upon the soyle, with syluer dewe so swete
For the durste for shame not apere
Under the lyght of ϸbebus beames clere

And so for anguysshe of my paynes kene
And for constrayner of my syghes sore
I set me downe, vnder a laurer grene
Full pyteously, and alway more and more
As I beheilde in to the boskes hore
I gan complayne myne inward deedly smerte
That aye so sore crampeth at myne herte

And whyle that I in my dreery payne
Gate, and beheilde about on euery tre
The foules sytte, alway twayne a twayne
The thought I thus, alas what may this
That euery foule hath hys lyberte be
Freely to chose, after hys delyze
Euerych his make, thus fro yere to yere

Thesely wyenne, the tytemose also

The

The lytell redbrest, haue free election
To flyen yfere, and together go
where as hem lyst, aboute enuyron
As they of kynde haue inclination
And as Nature, empresse and gyde
Of euery thynge lyst to prouyde

But man alone, alas the harde stounde
Full cruelly, by kyndes ordynaunce
Constrayned is, and by statute bounde
And debarred from all suche pleasaunce
what meneth this, what is this purueyaūce
Of god aboue, agayne all ryght of kynde
wythout cause, so narow man to bynde

Thus may I sene and playne, alas
My wofull houre, and my dyssauenture
That doulfully stonde in the same caas
So ferre behynde, from all health and cure
My wounde abydeth lyke a surfanure
For me fortune so felly lyst dyspose
My harme is hyd, that I dare not dysclose

For I my herte haue set, in suche a place
where I am neuer lykely for to spede
So ferre I am hyndred from her grace
That saue daunger, I haue none other mede
And thus alas, I not who shall me rede
Ne for myne helpe shape remedye
For shame bouche, and for false enuye

The whyche twayne, aye stedeth in my wey
Malycyously, and false suspection
Is very cause also that I dey
Enuyng and rote of my destruction
So that I trie, in conclusyon
with her traynes, that they wol me shende
Of my labour, that deth mote make an ende

Yet or I dye, with herte, wyl, and thought
To god of loue, this auowe I make
As I best can, howe dere that it be bought
where so it be, that I slepe or wake
whyle Boreas dothe the leaues slake
As I haue heyght, plainly tyl I sterue
For wel or wo, that I shal her serue

And for her sake, nowe this holy tyme
Saynt Valentyne, somwhat shal I write
Al though so be, that I can not ryme
Nor curyously by no crafte endyte
Yet leuer I haue, that she put the wyte
In vnconnynge, then in negligence
what euer I saye, of her excellence

what euer I saye, it is of dute
In sothfastnesse, and no presumpcion
Thys I ensure to you that shall it se
That it is all vnder correction
what I reherce in cōmendacion
Of her, that I shall to you as blyue
So as I can, her vertues here dyscryue.

¶ Ryght by example, as the somer sonne
Passeth the sterre, wyth hys beames shene
And Lucyfer, amonge the skyes donne
A morowe sheweth, to voyde nyghtes tene
So verely, wythouten any wene
My lady passeth, who so taketh hede
All the alyue, to speake of womanhede

And as the Ruby hath the souerayne
Of ryche stones, and the regalye
And the rose of swetenesse and beaute
Of freshe floures, wythout any lye
Ryght so in sothe, wyth her goodly eye
She passeth all, in bounty and fayrenesse
Of maner eke, and of gentylnesse

For she is both the fayrest and the best
To reken all, in very sothfastnesse
For euery vertue is in her at reste
And furthermore, to speake of stedfastnesse
She is the rote, and of semelynesse
The very myrrour, and of gouernaunce
To all example, wythouten variaunce

Of porte benygne, and wonder glad of chere
Hauynge euermore her trewe aduertence
Alwaye to reason, so that her desyre
Is dyrected aye, by wytte and prouydence
There to of wytte, and of hye prudence
She is the welle, aye deuoyde of pryde
That vnto vertue, her selfen is the gyde

And ouer thys, in her daliaunce
Lowly she is, discrete and wyse
And goodly gladde, by attemperaunce
That euery wyght, of hygh and lowe degre
Are glad in herte, wyth her for to be
So that shortly, yf I shall not lye
She named is, the Floure of Curtesye

And there to speake of femynyte

The leste mannyshe in comparison
Goodly abasshed, hauynge aye pyte
Of hem that ben in tribulacion
For she alone is consolacion
To all that asne in myschefe and in nede
To comforte hem, of her womanhede

And aye in vertue is her besy charge
Sadde and demure, and but of wordes fewe
Dredefull also of tonges that ben large
Eschewynge aye hem, that lysten to hewe
Aboue her heed, her wordes for to shewe
Dyshonestly to speke of any wyght
She dredly hateth, of hem to haue a syght

The herte of whom so honest is and clene
And her entent, so faythfull and entere
That she ne may, for all the worlde sustene
To suffre her eeres any worde to here
Of frende nor foe, neyther ferre ne nere
Amysse resonynge, þ hinder shulde his name
And yf she do, she wexeth reed for shame

So trewly in mennynge she is in sette
Wythout chaungynge, or any doublenesse
For bountie and beautie, are togethes knette
In her persone, vnder faythfulnesse
For voyde she is of newfangelnesse
In herte aye one, for euer to persener
There she is sette, and neuer to dysseuer

I am to rude, her vertues euerychone
Conuyngly to dystryue and wryte
For well ye wote, colour haue I none
Lyke her dyscrecion, craftely to endyte
For what I saye, all it is to lyte
Wherfore to you, thus I me excuse
That I aqueynted am not wyth no muse

By rethorykе, my style to gouerne
In her prayse and cõmendacyon
I am to blynde, so hyghe to discerne
Of her goodnesse, to make dyscripcion
Saue thus I saye in conclusion
yf that I shall shortely commende
In her is naught, that nature can amende

For good she is, lyke to Polycene
And in fayrenesse, to the quene Helayne
Stedfast of herte, as was Dorigene
And wysely trouth, yf I shall not fayne
In constaunce ete & fayth, she may attayne
To Cleopatre, and therto as sertone
Is was of Troye, the whyte Antygone

As Hester mete, lyke Judith of prudence
Kynde as Alcest, or Marcia Catoun
And to Grisylde lyke in patience
And Ariadne of dyscrecioun
And to Lucrece, that was of Rome toun
She may be lykened as for honeste
And for her fayth, vnto Penelope

To fayre Phyllis, and to Hypsiphiles
For innocence, and for womanhede
For semelynesse vnto Canace
And ouer thys, to speke of goodlyhede
She passeth all that I can of rede
For worde and dede, that she nought ne fail
Is lyke in vertue, and her werkes all

For though that Dido wyth wytte sage
was in her tyme stedfast to Enee
Of hastynesse yet she dyd outrage
And so for Jason dyd also Medee
But my lady is so auysee
That bounte & beautye, both in her demeyne
She maketh bountye alwaye sourayne

This is to mene, bountye goeth afore
Lad by prudence, and hath the sourainte
And beautye foloweth, ruled by her lore
That she ne fende her in no degre
So that in one, thys goodly fresshe fre
Surmountynge al, wythouten any were
Is good and fayre, in one persone yfere

And though that I for very ignoraunce
Ne maye dystryue her vertues by and by
yet on thys daye for a remembraunce
Onely supported vnder her mercy
wyth quakynge honde, I shall full humbly
To her hyneste, my rudenesse for to quyte
A lytell balade, here hyneth endyte

Euer as I can suppresse in myne herte
Alwaye wyth feare, betwyxte drede & shame
Leste out of lose, any worde asterte
In thys metre, to make it seme lame
Chaucer is dede, that had suche a name
Of fayre makynge, that wythout wene
Fayrest in our tonge, as the Laurer grene

we maye assaye for to counterfete

Hys gaye style, but it wyll not be
The welle is drye, wyth the lycoure swete,
Both of Clye, and of Caliope
And fyrst of all, I woll excuse me
To her that is grounde of goodlyhede
And thus I saye, vnto yll her womanhede

¶ Balade symple.

With all my myght, and my beste entente
Wyth all the fayth that myghtye god of kynde
Me yaue, syth he me soule & knowynge sent
I chese, and to thys bonde euer I me bynde
To loue you best, whyle I haue lyfe & mynd
Thus herde I foules in the dawnynge
Upon the daye of saynt Valentyne synge

yet chese I at the begynnyng, in thys entent
To loue you, though I no mercy fynde
And yf you lyste I dyed, I wolde assent
As euer thynne I quycke out of thys kynde
Suffyseth me to serue your fethers vnde
Thus herde I foules in the morynge
Upon the daye of saynt Valentyne synge

And ouer thys myne hertes luste to bente
In honour onely of the wodde bynde
Holy I vowe, neuer to repente
In love or wo, where so that I wynde
To forse Cupide, wyth hys eyen blynde
The foules all, when Tytan dyd springe
Wyth deuout hert, me thought I herd synge.

¶ Lenuoye.

¶ Princesse of beauty, to you I represent
Thys symple dyte, rude as in makynge
Of herte and wyll, faythfull in myne entent
Lyke as thys daye, foules herde I synge.

¶ Here endeth the Floure of Curtesy and here after foloweth, howe pyte is deed and buryed in a gentle herte.

Pyte yͭ I haue sought so yore ago
wyth herte sore and full of besy payne
yͭ in this world was neuer wyght so wo
wythout deth, and yf I shall not fayne
My purpose was, pyte to complayne
Upon teh cruelte and tyrannye
Of loue, that for my trouth doth me dye

And that I by length of certayne yeres
Had euer in one, sought a tyme to speke
To Pyte ran I, all by spreynt wyth teres
To prayen her on Cruelte me awreke
But or I myght wyth any worde out breke
Or tell her any of my paynes smerte
I founde her deed, and buryed in an herte

Adowne I fell, when I sawe the herse
Deed as a stone, whyle yͭ the sowne me lasse
But vp I rose, wyth colour full dyuerse
And pytously on her myne eyen I caste
And neuer the corse I gan preasen taste
And for the soule, I hope me for to pray
I was but lorne, there was no more to say

Thus am I slayne, syth that Pyte is deed
Alas that daye that euer it shulde fall
What maner man dare now holde vp his heed
To whome shal nowe any sorowful hert cal
Nowe Cruelte hath caste to slee vs all
In vdle hope, folke redeles of payne
Syth she is deed, to whom shal we complayne

But yet encreaseth me thys wonder newe
That no wyght wote that she is deed but I
So many men as in her tyme her knewe
And yet she deyde so sodeynly
For I haue sought her euer full besely
Syth I had fyrst wytte or mynde
But she was deed er I coude her fynde

Aboute her herse there stoden lustely
wythouten any me, as thought me
Bountie, perfytly well armed and rychely
And freshe Beaute, Lust, and Jolyte
Assured maner, youthe, and Honeste
Wysedome, Estate, Drede, & Gouernaunce
Confedred both by bonde and alyaunce

Howe pyte is deed.

A complaynt had I wrytten in my honde
To haue put to pyte, as a byll
But I there all thys company fonde
That rather wolde all my cause spyll
Then do me helpe, I helde my playnt styll
For to those folke wythouten fayle
wythout pyte, there maye no byll auayle

Then leaue all vertues, saue onely pyte
Kepynge the corse, as ye haue herde me sayne
Conueyed by bonde vnto Cruelte
And be assented when I shalbe slayne
And I haue put my complaynte vp agayne
For to my foes, my byll I dare not shewe
The effecte, whych sayeth thus in wordes (fewe

Humblest of herte, hyest of reuerence
Benigne floure, crowne of vertues all
Sheweth vnto your royall excellence
Your seruaunt, yf I durst me so call
Hys mortall harme, in whych he is yfall
And nought all onely for hys wofull fate
But for your renome, as he shall declare

It stodeth thus, that your cõtrary cruelte
Alyed is ayenst your regalye
Vnder colour of womanly beaute
For men shulde not knowe her tyrannye
wyth bountie, Gentylesse, and Curtesye
And hath depryued you of your place
That is hygh beaute, apertenaunt to youre (grace

For kyndly, by your heritage ryght
Ye be annexed euer vnto bounte
And verely ye ought do your myght
To helpe trouth in hys aduersite
Ye be also the corowne of beaute
And certes yf ye waute in these twayne
The world is lore, there is no more to sayne

Ne what auayleth maner & gentylesse
wythout you, benigne creature
Shall cruelte be your gouernouresse
Alas, what herte may it longe endure
wherfore but ye rather take cure
To breke that perylous aliaunce
Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeysaunce

And further, yf ye suffre thus
Your renome is forlo in a throwe
There shall no man wete what pyte is
Alas, that euer your renome is fall so lowe
Ye be also fro your heritage ythrowe
By cruelte, that occupyeth your place
And we dyspayred, that seken your grace

Haue mercy on me, thou Hermus quene
That you haue sought, so tenderly and sore
Let some streme of lyght on me be sene
That loue and drede you euer lenger & more
For sothly to shyne, I desire so sore
And though I be not comyng for to playne
For goddes loue haue mercy on my payne

My payne is thys, that what so I desyre
That haue I not, ne nothynge lyke therto
And euer setteth desyre myne herte on fyre
Ne on that other syde where that I go
what maner thyng that may encrease my wo
That haue I redy besought euery where
Me lacketh but my dethe, and then my bere

what neded to shewe perell of my payne
Syth euery wo, that herte may bethynke
I suffre, and yet I dare not to you playne
For well I wote, though I wake or wynke
Ye recke not whether I flete or synke
And nathelesse yet my trouth I shall fulfylle
Vnto my death, and that shall well be sene

Thys is to sayne, I wyll be yours euer
Though ye me slee by cruelte your so
Algate my spirite shall neuer dyscuer
Fro your seruyce, for any payne or wo
Syth ye be yet dede, alas that it is so
Thus for your death, I may wepe & playne
wyth herte sore, and full of besy payne.

Explicit.

¶ La belle dame sans mercy.

HAlfe in a dreame, not fully well awaked
The golde slepe me wrapped vnder hys wyng
Yet nat for thy I rose, and well nygh naked
All sodaynlye my selfe remembryng
Of a mater, leuynge all other thynge
Whyche I muste do wythouten moze delay
For hem, whiche I durst nat dysobey

My charge was this, to translate by and by
All thynge forgyue, as parte of my penaunce
A boke, called La belle dame sans mercy
whiche mayster Alayne made of remembraunce
Clerke secretarie wyth the kyng of Fraunce
And here vpon a whyle I stode musynge
And in my selfe greatly ymagenynge

What wyse I shuld perform ꝑ sayd proceste
Consyderynge by good aduysement
My vnconnynge, and my great symplenesse
And ayen wayde the strayte comaundement
whyche that I had, and thus in myne entent
I was vered and tourned vp and downe
And yet at last, as in conclusyon

I cast my clothes on, and went my way
This forsayd charge hauyng in remembraunce
Tyll I came to a lusty grene valey
Full of flowres, to se a great pleasaunce
And so boldly with theyr benigne suffraunce
which rede this boke, touchyng thys matere
Thus I began, yf it please you to here.

NIt longe ago, rydynge an easy pace
I fell in thought of loye full desperate
with grete dysease & payne so that I was
Of all louers the most vnfortunate
Syth by his darte, most cruell full of hate
The dethe hath take my lady and maystresse
And lefte me sole, thus dyscomfyte and mate
Sore languyshynge, and in way of distresse

Than sayd I thus, it falleth me to cesse
Eyther to ryme, or dytees for to make
And I surely to make a full promesse
To laugh no more, but wepe in clothesblake
My ioyfull tyme (alas) nowe doth it slake
For in my selfe I fele no maner of ease
Let it be wrytten, suche fortune (as I take)
which neyther me, nor non other doth please

If it were so, my wyll or myne entent
Constrayned were, a ioyfull thyng to wryte
My penne coude neuer knowe, what it ment
To speke therof, my tonge hath no delyte
Tho with my mouthe I laugh, moch or lyte
Myne eyen sholde make a countenaunce vntrue
My herte also, wolde haue therof dyspyte
The wepynge teares, haue so large yssue

These sicke louers I leue, that to hem lõges
whiche lede theyr lyfe in hope of alegeaunce
That is to saye, to make balades and songes
Euery of hem, as they fele theyr greuaunce
For she that was my loye, and my pleasaunce
whose soule I pray god, of hys mercy saue
She hath my wyll, myne hertes ordynaunce
whiche lyeth here, within this tombe ygraue

Fro this tyme forth, tyme is to hold my pees
It wereth me, this mater for to trete
Let other louers put hem selfe in prees
Theyr season is, my tyme is nowe forgete
Fortune by strength, the forcer hath vnshete
wherin was sperde all my worldly rychesse
And all the goodes, whyche that I haue gete
In my best tyme of youthe, and lustynesse

Loue hath me kepte vnder hys gouernaunce
If I myssayd, god graunt me forgyuenesse
yf I dyd well, yet felte I no pleasaunce
It caused neyther ioye nor heynesse
For whan she dyed, that was my maystres
My welfare, than made the same purchase
The dethe hath shette my bondes of wytnes
which for nothyng myn herte shal neuer pase

In this gret thought, sore troubled in minde
Alone thus rode I, all the morowe tyde
Tyll at the last it happed me to fynde

The place, wherin I cast me to abyde
whan that I had no further for to ryde
And as I went, my lodgynge to puruey
Ryght soone I herde, a lytell me besyde
In a garden, where mynstrels gan to play

Wyth that anone, I went me backer more
My selfe and I, me thought we were ynowe
But twayne þ were my frendes here before
Had me espyed, and yet I wote nat howe
They came for me, awaywarde I me drowe
Somwhat by force, somwhat by her request
That in no wyse, I coude my selfe restowe
But nedes I must come in and se the feest

At my comynge, the ladyes euerychone
Bad me welcome, god wote right gentylly
And made me chere, euery one by one
A great dele better than I was worthy
And of theyr grace, shewed me grete curtesy
Vb good disport, bycause I shuld nat mourne
That day I bode styll in theyr company
Whyche was to me, a gracyous sojourne

The bordes were spred, in ryght lytell space
The ladyes sat, eche as hem semed best
There were no deedly seruauntes in the place
But chosen men, ryght of the goodlyest
And some there were, parauenture most freshest
That sawe theyr vages full demure
Wythout semblaunt, eyther to most or lest
Natwithstandyng, they had hem vnder cure

Amonge all other, one I gan espy
Which in grete thought, ful ofte came & went
As one that had ben rauyshed vtterly
In hys languadge, nat greatly dylygent
His countenaunce he kept vb great tourment
But his desyre farre passed hys reason
For euer hys eye, went after hys entent
Full many a tyme, whan it was no season

To make chere, for him selfe he payned
And outwardly he fayned great gladnesse
To synge also, byforce he was constrayned
For no pleasaunce, but very thankfastnesse
For the complaynte of hys moste heuynesse
Came to hys vorer, alway without request
Lyke as the sowne of bydes dothe erpresse
Whan they synge loude, in frythe or in forest

Other there were, that serued in the hall
But none lyke hym, as after myne aduyse
For he was pale, and somwhat leane withal
Hys speche also trymbled in fereful wyse
And euer alone, but whan he dyd seruyse
All blacke he ware, & no deuyse but playne
Me thought by hym, as my wyt coude suffyse
His herte was nothing in his own demeyne

To feest hem all, he dyd his dylygence
And well he coude, ryght as it semed me
But euermore, whan he was in presence
Hys chere was done, it wolde none other be
Hys schole mayster had suche authoute
That all the whyle he bode styll in the place
Speke coude he nat, but vpon her he mute
He loked styll, with ryght a pytous face

Wyth that hys heed he tourned at the last
For to beholde the ladyes euerychone
But euer in one, he set his eye stedfast
On her, whyche his thought was most vpon
For of hys eyen, the shot I knewe anone
Which ferefull was, vb right buble requestes
Than to my selfe I sayd by god alone
Such one was I, or that I sawe theise ieftes

Out of the prese he wente full easely
To make stable his heuy countenaunce
And wote ye well, he syghed wonderly
For hys sorowes and wofull remembraunce
That in hym selfe, he made his ordynaunce
And forthwithall came to bryng in the messe
But for to singe, hys most wofull penaunce
God wote it was a pytous entremesse

After dyner anone, they hem auaunced
To daunce aboue the folkes euerychone
And forthwithal, thys heuy man he daunced
Somtyme with twayne, & somtyme vb one
Vnto hem all, hys chere was after one
Nowe here nowe there, as fell by auenture
But euer amonge, he drewe to her alone
Whyche he most dred, of lyuynge creature

To myne aduyse, good was his purueyance
whan he her chase, to hys mayster alone
If that her herte were set to hys pleasaunce
As moche as was her beauteous persone
For who so euer setteth hys trust vpon
The reporte of the eyen, wythouten more
He might be deed, and grauen vnder stone

Or euer

Or euer he shulde, his hertes ease restore

In her sayled nothynge, that I coude gesse
One wyse nor other, pleuy nor perte
I garyson she was, of al goodlynesse
To make a frounter, for a louers herte
Right ponge & freshe, a woman ful couerte
Assured wele of porte, and ese of chere
wele at her ease, withouten wo or smerte
Al vnderneth the standerde of daungere

To se the feest, it wereyed me ful sore
For beuy love both sore the herte trauayle
Out of the prese, I me withdrawe therfore
And let me downe alone behynde a trayle
ful of leues, to se a great meruayle
with grene wrethes yhounden wonderly
The leues were so thycke withouten fayle
That throughout, no man might me espy

To this lady he came ful curtesly
whā he thought tyme to dance vp her a trace
Set in an herber, made fule plesauntly
They rested hem fro thens but a lytel space
Nygh hem were none, of a certayne compace
But onely they, as farre as I coude se
Save the trayle, there I had chose my place
There was no more betwene hem two & me

I harde the louer sighyng wonder sore
For ave the more, the sorer it him sought
His inwarde paine he coude not kepe in store
Nor for to speke, so hardy was he nought
His lechc was nere, & gretter was his thought
He mused sore, to conquere his desyre
For no mā may to more penaūce be brought
That in his heate, to bring him to the fyre

The herte began to swel within his cheste
So sore strayned, for anguisshe & for payne
That al to peces almoste it to brest
whan both at ones, so sore it dyd constrayne
Desyre was bold, but shame it gan restrayne
That one was large, the other was ful close
No lytel charge was layde on him certayne
To kepe suche werre, and haue so many fose

Ful oftē tymes to speke, him self he payned
But shamfastnesse & drede, sayd euer nay
Yet at the last, so sore he was constrayned
whan he full longe had put it in delay
To his lady, right thus than gan he say
with dredeful voyce, wepyng, halfe in a rage
For me was purueyed, an vnhappy day
whan I fyrst had a syght of your vysage

I suffre payne god wote, ful hote brennynge
To cause my dethe, all for my true seruyse
And I se well, ye recke therof nothyng
Nor take no hede of it, in no kynde wyse
But whan I speke after my best aduyse
Ye set it at nought, but make therof a game
And thoughe I sewe, so great an entrepryse
Yet peyseth not your worshyp nor your fame

Alas, what shulde it be to you preiudyce
If that a man do loue you faythfully
To your worshyp, eschewynge euery vyce
So am I yours, and wyll be verily
I chalenge nought of ryght, and reason why
For I am hole submyt vnto your seruyce
Ryght as ye lyst it be, ryght so wyll I
To bynde my self, where I was in fraūchise

L amant

Though it be so, that I can nat deserue
To haue your grace, but alway lyue in drede
Yet suffre me, you for to loue and serue
without en maugre, of your most goodlyhede
Both fayth & trouth I gyue your womānede
And my seruyce wythout any callynge
Loue hath me bound, without wage or mede
To be your man, and leue all other thynge

L a dame

Whan thys lady had herde al this language
She gaue answere, full softe and demurely
wythout chaungynge of colour or courage
Nothynge in haste, but mesurably
We thynketh syr, your thought is great foly
Purpose ye nought, your labour for to cese
For thynketh not, whyles ye lyue and I
In thys mater, to set your herte in pease

L amant

There may none make the peace, but only ye
which are the grounde & cause of al this war
For wyth your eyen, the letters written be
By whyche I am defyed and put a far
Your plesaunt loke, my very lode star
was made herande, of thilke same defyaunce
whiche vtterly behyght me for to barre
Aby faythfull trust, and all myne affyaunce

L a dame

To lyue in wo, he hath great fantasy
And of hys herte also slypper holde
That onely for beholdynge of an eye

Can nat

Can not abyde in peace, as reason wolde
Other of me, yf ye lyst ye may beholde
our eyes are made to loke, why should we spare
I take no kepe, neyther of yonge ne olde
who lefely smerte, I counsayle hym beware

Lamant.

If it be so, one hurte another sore
In hys defaute, that leseth the greuaunce
Of very ryght, a man may do no more
Yet reason wolde it were in remembraunce
And syth fortune onely by her chaunce
Hath causyd me to suffre all thys payne
By your beaute, wyth all the circumstaunce
why lyste ye haue me, in so great disdayne

La dame.

To your persone, ne haue I no disdayne
Nor neuer had trewly, ne nought wyll haue
Nor ryght great loue, nor hatred in certayne
Nor your counsayle to know, so god me saue
yf suche loue be in your mynde ygraue
That lytell thynge, may do you displeasaunce
You to begyle, or make you for to raue
I wyll nat cause, no suche encombraunce

Lamant.

What euer it be, yͤ me hath thus purchased
wenynge hath nat dysceyued me certayne
But feruent loue, so sore hath me vchased
That I vnware, am casten in your chayne
And syth so is, as fortune lyst ordayne
All my welfare, is in your haundes fall
In eschewynge of more myschenous payne
who soneest dyeth, hys care is leest of all

La dame.

This sykenesse is ryght easy to endure
But fewe people, it causeth for to dye
But what they meane, I knowe it very sure
Of more comforte, to drawe the remedy
Suche be there nowe, playnyng ful prtously
That fele god wote, nat aither greteest paine
And yf so be, loue hurte so greuously
Lesse harm it were, one sorowful thã twayn

Lamant.

Alas madame, yf that it myght you please
Moche better it were, by way of gentylnesse
Of one sory, to make twayne wel at ease
Than hym to destroye that lyueth in distresse
For my desyre is, neyther more nor lesse
But wyth seruyce, to do for your pleasaunce
In eschewynge all maner doublenesse
To make two ioyes, in stede of one greuaũce

La dame.

Of loue I seke, neyther pleasaunce nor ease
Nor haue therin no great affyaunce
Though ye be sick, it doth me nothing please
Also I take no hede of your pleasaunce
Chese who so wyll, her hertes to auaunce
Fre am I nowe, and free wyll I endure
To be ruled by mannes gouernaunce
For erthely good, Nay, that I you ensure

Lamant.

Loue, which that ioy & sorowe doth departe
Hath set the ladyes out of all seruage
And largely dothe graunt hem for her parte
Lordshyp and rule of euery maner of age
The poore seruaũt, nought hathof auantage
But what he may gete onely by purchase
And he that ones, to loue doth hys homage
Full often tymes, dere bought is the eychelle

La dame.

Ladyes be nat so symple, thus I mene
So dull of wyt, so sotted in foly
That for wordes, whiche sayd be of yͤ splene
In fayre langage, payntedfull pleasauntly
whiche ye and mo, holde scholes of dayly
To make hem all, great wonders to suppose
But sone they can away, theyr herdes wyre
And to fayre speche, lyghtly theyr eres close

Lamant.

There is no man, that iangleth busyly
And setteth hys herte, & all myndetherfore
That by reason, may playne so prtously
As he that hath moche heuynesse in store
whose heed is hole, and sayth that it is sore
Hys fayned chere, is harde to kepe in mewe
But thought, whyche is vnfayned euermore
The wordes preueth, as the workes shewe

La dame.

Loue is subtell, and hath a great awayte
sharpe in working, in gabbing gret pleasaũce
And can hem venge, of suche as by dyscrete
wolde fele and knowe, his secret gouernaũce
And maketh hem to obey hys ordynaunce
By cherefull wayes, as in hem is supposed
But whan they fall in to repentaunce
Than in a rage, her counsayle is disclosed

Lamant.

Lowe for as moche, as god and eke nature
Hath vnaunced loue, to so hye degre
Moche sharpe is the poynt, thus am I sure
Yet greueth more the faute, where euer it be
who hath no colde, of heate hath no deynte
The one for that other, asked is expresse
And of pleasaunce, knoweth none certeyne
But it be one, in thought and heynesse

La dame.

La dame

As for pleasaunce, it is nat alway one
That you think swete, I thinke it better pain
Ye may nat me cõstrayne, nor yet right none
After your lust to loue, that is but vayn
To chalenge loue by ryght, was neuer tryne
But herte assent, before bonde and promyse
For strength and force, may nat attayne
A wyll that standeth enfeffed in fraunchyse

Lamant

Ryght fayre lady, god mote I neuer please
yf I seke other ryght in thys case
But for to shewe you playnly my dysease
And your mercy to abyde, & eke your grace
If I purpose your honour to deface
Or euer dyd, god and fortune me shende
And that I neuer vnryghtfully purchace
One onely toy, vnto my lyues ende

La dame

Ye and other, that swere suche othes false
And so condempne, and curse to and fro
Full sykerly ye were your othes lasse
No lenger than the wordes ben ago
And god, and eke his sayntes laughe also
In suche swerying, there is no stedfastnesse
And these wretches that haue ful trust therto
After they wepe and wayle in distresse

Lamant

He hath no corage of a man trewly
That seeketh pleasaunce, worshyp to dyspyse
Nor to be called forthe, as not worthy
The erthe to touche, yf ayre in no kyns wyse
A trusty herte, a mouth without feyntyse
Thus be the strength of euery maner name
And who that layeth his fayth for lytel pryse
He leseth bothe hys worshyp and hys fame

La dame.

A cursed herte, a mouth that is curteyse
Ful well ye wote they be not accordynge
Yet fayned chere, right soone may be apeyse
where of malyce is set all her workynge
Full false semblaunt they bere, & true semynge
Her name, her fame, her tonges but fayned
Worshyp in hem is put in forgettynge
Nought repented, nor in no wyse cõplayned

Lamant.

Who thynketh yll, no good may hym befall
God of hys grace graunt eche man his desert
But for hys loue, amonge your thoughtes all
As thynke vpon my wofull sorowes smert
For of my payne, whedet your tender herte
Of swete pyte, be not therwyth agreued
And of your grace, to me were discouerte
That by your mean, sone shulde I be releued

La dame.

A lightsome herte, a folly of pleasaunce
Are moche better, the lesse whyle they abyde
They make you think, & bring you in attraice
But that sykenesse, wyll sone be remedyde
Respyte your thought, and put al thys aside
Full good dispoyte werieth me all day
To helpe nor hurte, my wyll is not applyde
who troweth me not, I let hem passe away

Lamant.

Who hath a bryde, a faucon, or a hounde
That foloweth hym for loue in euery place
He cherisheth hym, & keepeth hym full sounde
Out of hys syght, he wyl not hym enchace
And I that set me wyttes in this cace
On you alone, wythouten any chaunge
Am put vnder, moche farther out of grace
And lesse set by, than other that be straunge

La dame.

Though I make chere to euery man aboute
For my worshyp, & for myne owne fraunchyse
To you I nyl do so, wythouten doute
In eschewynge all maner prowdyse
For wote ye well, loue is so lytell wyse
And in byleue, so lyghtly wyll be brought
That he taketh all at hys owne deuyse
Of thyng god wote, yᵗ serueth hym of nought

Lamant.

yf I by loue, and by my true seruyce
Lese yᵗ good chere yᵗ straungers haue alway
wherof shall serue my trouth in any wyse
Lelle than to him, that cometh & goth all day
whiche holdeth of you nothynge, yᵗ is no nay
Also in you is lost, as to my semynge
All curtesy, whyche of reason wyll say
That loue for loue, were lawfull desyrynge

La dame.

Curtesy is alyed wonder nere
To worshyp, whyche hym loueth tenderly
And he wyll nat be bounde for no playere
Nor for no gystes, I say you verely
But hys good chere, departe full largely
where hym lyketh, as his conceyte wyll fall
Guerdon cõstrayned a gifte done thankfully
These twayn cã neuer accorde nor neuer shal

Lamant.

As for guerdon I seke none in this cace
For that desert, to me it is to hye
wherfore I aske your pardon & your grace
Sythe me behoueth dethe, or your mercy

To grue

To ȝyue the good where it wanteth truely
That were reason, and a curtyle maniere
And to your owne moch better were worthy
Thā to straungers, to shew hem louely chere

La dame

What call ye good, sayne wolde I ꝑ I wyst
That pleaseth one, another smerteth sore
But of hys owne, to large is he that lyst
Gyue moch, and lese hys good name therfore
One shulde nat make a graunt, lytel ne more
But the requeste were ryght well accordynge
Yf worshyp be not kepte and set before
All that is lefte, is but a lytell thynge

L amant

In to this worlde was founded neuer none
Nor vnder heuen creature yborne
Nor neuer shall, saue onely your persone
To whō your worshyp toucheth halfe so sore
But me whiche haue no reason lefte ne more
Of youthe ne age, but dyll in your seruyce
I haue no eyen, no wit, nor mouth in store
But all be gyuen to the same office

L a dame.

A full great charge hath he wythouten fayle
That hys worshyp keperh in sykernesse
But in daunger he setteth hys trauayle
That setteth it wyth others busynesse
To hym that longeth, honour and noblesse
Apon none other shulde nat be awayte
For of hys owne, so moche hath he the lesse
That of other, moche folowet hethe conceyte

L amant

Your eyen hath set ꝑ pryntwhich that I sete
wythin my herte, that where so euer I go
Yf I do thynge, that sowneth vnto wele
Nedes must it come from you, & fro no mo
Fortune wyll thys, that I for wele or wo
Thy lyfe endure, your mercy abydynge
And very ryght wyll, that I thynke also
Of your worshyp, aboue all other thynge

L a dame.

To your worshyp se well, for that is nede
That ye spende nat youre season all in vayne
As touchynge myne, I rede you take no hede
Thy youre folly, to put your selfe in payne
To ouercome is good, and to restrayne
An herte, whyche is dyscevred folyly
For worse it is to bycke than bowe certayne
Better bowe, than to fall sodaynly

L amant.

Nowe fayre lady thynke, syth it fyrst began
That loue hath set myn herte vnder hys cure
Yt neuer myght, ne truely I ne can
None other serue, whyle I shall here endure
In most fer wyse, therof I make you sure
which may not be withdrawe, this is no nay
I must abyde all maner aduenture
For I may neyther put to nor take away

L a dame.

I holde it for no gyfte in sothfastnesse
That one offereth, where it is forsake
For suche a gyfte is abandonynge ertresse
That wyth worshyp ayen may not be take
He hath an herte full fell that lyst to make
A gyfte lyghtly, that put is to refuse
But he is wyse, that suche conceyte wyl slake
So that hym nede, neyther to studyr ne muse

L amant.

He shulde nat muse, ꝑ hath hys seruyce spent
On her, whyche is a lady honourable
And yf I spende my tyme to that entent
Yet at the lest, I am not reprouable
Of tayned herte, to thynke I am vnable
Or I mystoke, whan I made thys requeste
By whiche long hath of enterprise notable
So many hertes goten by conqueste

L a dame.

If that ye lyste do after my counsayle
Seche a layser, and of more hyghet fame
whych in seruyce of loue, wyll you preuayle
After your thought, accordynge to the same
Ye hurtteth both hys worshyp and hys name
That folyly, for ryuayne hi selfe wyl trouble
And he also leseth his after game
That surely can not set hys poyntes double

L amant.

This your counsayle for ought that I can se
Is better sayd than done, to myne aduyse
Though I beleue it not, forgyue it me
Myne herte is such, so hole without feynynge
That I ne may gyue credence in no wyse
To thyng, which is not sowning vnto truth
Other counsayle I se, be but fantasyse
Haue of your grace, to shewe pyte and ruth

L a dame.

I holde hym wyse that worketh no foly
And whan hym lyst, can leue & parte therfro
But in conuynge, he is to lerne truely
That wolde hym selfe conduyte, & can not so
And he that wyll not after counsayle do
His sute he putteth in to dysperaunce
And all the good that shulde fall hym to
Is lost and dede, clene out of remembraunce

L amant.

Yet wyll

Yet wyl I sewe thys matter faythfully
whyles I lyue, what euer be my chaunce
And yf it hap, that in my truth I dye
Than deth shal do me no displeasaunce
But whan that I, by your harde sufferaunce
Shall dye so true, & with so great a payne
yet shal it do me much the lesse greuaūce
Than for to lyue a false louer certayne

La dame.

Of me get ye ryght nought, thys is no fable
I wyl to you be neyther harde nor strayte
And ryght wyl not no man customable
To thynke ye shulde be sure of my conceyte
who seeketh sorowe, his be the receyte
Other counsayle can I not gete nor se
Nor for to lerne, I call me not to awayte
who wyll therof, let hym assaye for me

L amant.

Ones must it be assayde, that is no nay
with suche as be of reputacyon
And of true loue, the ryght honour to pay
Of free hertes gotten by dewe raunsome
For frewyl holdeth thys opinion
That it is great duresse and discomforte
To kepe a herte in so straye a prison
That hath but one body for his disporte

La dame.

I knowe so many causes meruayious
That I must nede of reason thynke certaine
That such auenture is wonder perylious
And yet wel more, the coming backe againe
Good or worshyp, therof is seldome seine
where I ne wyll make suche araye
As for to fynde a pleasaunce, but a barayne
whan it shal cost so dere the fyrst assaye

L amant.

ye haue no cause to dout of this mater
Nor you to mene with no such fantasyse
To put me farre al out as a straunger
For your goodnesse can thinke & wel aduyse
That I haue made a pryse in euery wyse
By whiche my truth sheweth open euidence
Thy longe abydyng, and my trewe seruyce
Maye well be knowen by playne experience

La dame.

Of very ryght he may be called trewe
And so must he be take in euery place
That can discerne, and let as he ne knewe
And kepe the good, yf he it may purchace
For who ỳ playeth, or sweareth in any case
Right wel ye wote, in ỳ no trouth is preued
Such hath there bene, & are, that gete grace
And lese it sone, whan they haue it acheued

L amant.

If truth me cause by vertue souerayne
To shewe good loue, & alway fynde cōtrary
And cherish ỳ, which seeth me with ỳ paine
This is to me a louely aduersary
whan ỳ pyte, which longe on slepe doth tary
Hath set the fyne of al my heuynesse
yet her comforte to me moost necessary
Shal set my wyll more sure in stablenesse

La dame.

The wofull wight, what maye he thynke or say
The contrary of al ioy and gladnesse
I sicke bodye, his thought is alway
From hem that seien no sore nor sickenesse
Thus hurtes bene of diuers busynesse
which loue hath put to great hyndraunce
And truth also, put in forgetfulnesse
whan they ful sore begyn to sigh askaunce

L amant.

Now god defende, but he be harmeles
Of al worshyp or good that may befall
That to werst tourneth by his lewdnesse
I gyfte of grace, or any thinge at all
That his ladie vouchsafe vpon him call
Or cherisheth him in honorable wise
In that defaute, what euer he be that fall
Deserueth more than deth to suffre twyse

La dame.

There is no inge yet on suche trespace
By whych of right, loue may recouered be
One curseth fast, another doth manace
yet dyeth none, as farre as I can se
But kepe her course alway in one degre
And euermore, theyr labour doth encrease
To bringe ladies by theyr great subtelte
For others gylte, in sorowe and disease

L amant.

Albeit so, one doth so great offence
And is not deed, nor put to no mistyce
Right wel I wote him gayneth no defence
But he must ende in ful mischeuous wyse
And all euer sayd, god wyl him dispyse
For falsed is euer ful of cursedenesse
that his worshyp may neuer haue enterprise
where it reygneth, & hath the wylfulnesse

La dame.

Of that haue they no great fere now a daise
Such as wyl say and mayntayne it therto
That stedfast truth is nothing for to prayse
In hem that kepe it longe in wele or wo
Theyr busye hertes passen two and fro

They be so wel reclaymed to the lure
So wel lerned hem to wythholde also
And al to chaūg whā loue shuld best endure

Lamant.

Whan one hath set his hert in stable wyse
In such a place, as is both good and trewe
He shulde not flyt, but do forth his seruice
Alway withouten chaunge of any newe
As sone as loue begynneth to remewe
Al pleasaunce goth anone in lytle space
As for my partye, that shal I eschewe
whyle the soule abydeth in hys place

La dame.

To loue truely, there as it ought of right
Ye may not be mystaken doutelesse
But ye be soule dysceyued in your syght
By lyght vnderstandyng, as I gesse
yet may ye wel repele your busynesse
And to reason haue some attendaunce
Woch better thā to abyde by foly slumpenes
The feble socour of dysperaunce

Lamant.

Reason, counsayle, wysedome, & good aduise
Bene vnder loue arested euerychone
To which I can accorde in euery wyse
For they be not rebel, but styl as a stone
Theyr wyl and myne, be medled al in one
And therwyth bounden vp so strong a cheyne
That as in hem, departyng shal be none
But pyte bicke the myghty bonde atwayne

La dame.

Ye loue not your selfe, what euer ye be
That in loue stande forgete in euery place
And of your wo, yf ye haue no pyte
Others pite beleue ye not to purchace
But be fully assured, as in thys case
I am alway vnder one ordynaunce
To haue better trust not after grace
And al that leueth, take to your pleasaunce

Lamant.

Haue my hope so sure and so stedfast
That such a lady shulde not lacke pyte
But nowe alas, it is shyt vp so fast
That daunger sheweth on me hys cruelte
And yf she se the vertue fayle in me
Of true seruice, though she do fayle also
No wonder were, but thys is my surete
I must suffre, whych way that euer it go

La dame.

Leue thys purpose I rede you for the best
For the lenger ye kepe, it is in vayne
The lesse ye gete, as of your hertes rest
And to recouer it shal you neuer attayne
whā ye abyde good hope to make you fayne
Ye shal be founde alotted in dotage
And in the ende, ye shal knowe for certayne
Hope shal pay the wretches for her wage

Lamant.

Ye say as falleth moost for your pleasaunce
And your power is great, al thys I se
But hope shal neuer out of my remembraunce
By whych I sele so great aduersite
For whan nature hath set in you plente
Of al goodnesse by vertue and by grace
She neuer assembled hem, as semed me
To put pyte out of hys dwellynge place

La dame.

Pyte of ryght ought to be resonable
And to no wight do no great dishauauntage
There as is nede, it shulde be profytable
And to the pytous shewynge no damage
If a lady wyl do so great outrage
To shewe pyte and cause her owne debate
Of such pyte cometh dispytous rage
And of such loue, also ryght deedly hate

Lamant.

To comforte hem that lyue al comfortlesse
That is no harme, but cōforte to your name
But ye that haue a herte of such duresse
And a fayre lady I must affirme the same
If I dust say, ye wynne all thys defame
By cruelte, whych sytteth you full yl
But yl pyte, whych may al thys attame
In your hygh herte may rest and tary styll

La dame.

what euer he be that sayth he loueth me
And peraventure I leue wel it be so
Ought he be wroth, or shulde I blamed be
Though I did not as he wolde haue me do
If I medled wyth such or other mo
It myght be called pyte mercylesse
And afterwarde yf I shulde lyue in wo
Than to repent, it were to late I gesse

Lamant.

O marble hert, and yet more harde parde
whych mercy may not perce for no labour
More strong to bowe than is a myghty tre
what auayleth you to shew so great rygour
Pleaseth you more to se me dye thys hour
Before your eyen, for your disport and play
Than for to shewe some cōforte and socour
To respyte death, whych chaseth me alway

La dame.

Of your disease, ye may haue allegeaunce

And

And as for myne, I let it ouer slake
Also ye shal not dye for my pleasaunce
Nor for your heale, I can not surely make
I wyl not hurt my selfe for others sake
wepe they, laugh they, or synge they, I wa-
for this mater, so wyl I vndertake (rant
That none of hem shal make therof auaunt

Lamant.

I can not sayl of loue by god alone
I haue more cause to wepe in your presence
And wel ye wote, auauntour am I none
For certaynly, I loue better scilence
One shulde not loue by hertes credence
But he were sure to kepe it secretly
For a dauntour is of no reuerence
whan that his tonge is his moost enemy

La dame. (ment

Vale bouch in court, hath great cõmaunde-
Eche man studyeth to say the worst he may
These false louers in this time now present
They serue best to iangle as a Jay
The moost secrete ywys, yet some men say
Howe he mistrusted is in some partyse
wherfore to ladyes whã so men speke or say
It shulde be byleued in no wyse

Lamant

Of good and yl shal be, and is alway
The worlde is such, the erth is not al plaine
They þ be good, þ profe sheweth euerye day
And otherwyse great vilony certayne
It is reason, though one his tonge distayne
with cursed speech, to do hym selfe a shame
That such refuse shuld wrõgfully remayne
Upon the good renomed in theyr fame

La dame (ges newe

Suche as be nought, when they here tidyn-
That eche trespas shal lightly haue pardon
They that pursuen to be good and trewe
wyl not set by none yl disposition
To contynewe in euery good condicion
They are the first that fallen in damage
And ful freely the hertes habandon
To lytle layth, wyth soft and layze langage

Lamant.

Nowe knowe I wel of very certaynte
If one do truely, yet shal he be shente
Syth al maner of iustice and pyte
Is banished out of a ladyes entente
I can not se, but al is at one stente
The good, the yl, the vice, and eke the vertue
Such as be good, such haue þ punyshment
For the trespas of hem that lyue vntrue

La dame.

I haue no power you to do greuaunce
Nor to punyshe none other creature
But to eschewe the more encomberaunce
To kepe vs from you al, I holde it sure
False semblaunce, hath a face ful demure
Lyghtly to catche these ladyes in a wayte
wherfore we must, yf we wyl here endure
Make ryght good watche, lo this is my cõ-

Lamant. (ceyte

Syth that of grace, a goodly worde not one
May now be had, but alwaye kepte in store
I appele to god, for he may here my mone
Of the duresse, whych greueth me sore
And of pyte, I complayne furthermore
which he forgate, in al hys ordinaunce
Or els my lyfe to haue ended before
which so sone am put out of remembraunce

La dame.

My herte nor I haue done you no forfeyte
By which ye shulde complayne in any kynd
Nothing hurteth you but your owne cõceite
Beyng your selfe, for so ye shal it fynde
Thus alwaye let thys synke in your mynde
That your desyre shall neuer recouered be
Ye noy me sore, in wastyng al thys wynde
For I haue sayd ynough, as semeth me

Lamant.

Thys woful man rose vp in al hys payne
And so departed wyth weping countenaunce
his woful herte, almoost to brast in twayne
Ful lyke to dye, walking forth in a traunce
And sayd deth come forth, thy selfe auaunce
Or that myne herte forgete his propertie
And make shorter al thys woful penaunce
Of my poze lyfe, ful of aduersyte

Fro thes he went, but whither wist I not
Nor in what parte he drewe in sothfastnesse
But he no more was in hys ladyes thought
For to the daunce anone she gan her dresse
And afterwarde, one tolde me thus expresse
He rent his heer, for anguysshe and for paine
And in him selfe toke so great heuynesse
That he was deed wythin a day or twayne

¶ Lenuoy.

Ye true louers this I beseech
you all
Such auentures fye hem in
euery wyse
And as people defamed ye
hem call
For they fynely do you great preiudyse
Bid endeles stronge stuffed with ordinaūce
For they haue had long tyme by theyr offyce
The hole countrey of loue in obeysaunce

And ye ladyes, or what estate ye be
Of whom worthip hath chose his dwelling
For goddes loue do no such cruelte (place
Nor in no wyse ne foule not the trace
Of her that here is named cyghtewysly
Which by reason me semeth in thys case
Maye be called, La belle dame sans mercy

Go lytle boke, god sende the good passage
Chese wel thy way, be simple of maniere
Loke thy clothyng be lyke thy pylgrimage
And specially let thys be thy prayere
Unto hem all, that they wyll rede or here
Where thou art wronge after her help to cal
The to correcte in any parte or al

Pray hem also with thine humble seruice
Thy boldnesse to pardon in thys case
For els thou arte not able in no wyse
To make thy selfe appere in any place
And furthermore beseche hem of her grace
By her fauour and supportacion
To take in gre this rude translation

The whych god wote standeth ful destitute
Of eloquence, of meter, and colours
Lyke as a beest naked without refute
Upon a playne to abyde all maner showres
I can no more, but aske of hem socours
Of whose request yf were made in this wyse
Commaundyng me wyth body and seruyse

Right thus I make an ende of thys prosses
Beseechyng hym, that all hath in balaunce
That no trewe man be vered causelesse
As this ma was, which is of remembraūce
And all that doue her faythful obseruaunce
And in her trouth purpose hem to endure
I pray god sende hem better auenture.

Explicit.

Of quene Anne lida and false Arcite.

O Thou seyns God of ar-
mes Mars the rede
That in thy frosty coun-
tre called Trace
wythin thy grysly tem-
ples ful of drede
Honoured art as patron
of that place
wyth the Bellona Pallas full of grace
Be present, and my song continew and gye
At my begynnyng thus to the I crye

For it ful depe is sonken in my mynde
wyth pytous herte in Englyshe to endyte
Thys olde story, in latyn whych I fynde
Of quene Anuelyda and false Arcyte
That elde, whych all can frete and byte
And it hath freten many a noble story
Hath nygh deuoured out of our memorye

Be fauourable ehe thou Polymnia
On Pernaso that hath thy sustres glade
By Elycon, not farre from Cirla
Syngest wyth voice memorial in the shade
Under the Laurer whych that may not fade
And do that I my shyp to hauen wynne
Fyrst folowe I Stace, & after hym Corinne

Jamq; domos patrias Cirhic post aspera gentis, Prælia laurigero subuectus curru, Cæsar
Letifici plausus missusq; ad sidera vulgi.

whan Theseus wyth warres longe & great
The myghty folke of Cirhe hath ouercome
The laurer crowned in his chayre gold bete
Home to hys countre houses is prome
For whych the people blysful all and some
Do cryden, that to the sterres it wente
And hym to honouren dyd al her entente

Before thys duke, in signe of victory

The

The trompes come, and in his baner large
The ymage of Mars, and in token of glorie
Men myght se of tresour many a charge
many a bught helme & many a spere & targe
Many a fresh knight & many a blysfull rout
On horse and on foote, in all the felde about

Ipolyta his wyfe, the hardy quene
Of Cithya, that he conquered had
wyth Emelye her yong suster shene
Fayre in a chare of golde he with him lad
that all the grounde about her chare she spread
with bughtnesse of beautie in her face
Fulfylled of largesse and of grace

with hys triumphe & laurer corowned thus
In al the flourc of fortunes pevyng
Lete I this noble prince Theseus
Towarde Athenes in hys way rydyng
And fonde I wol in shortly to bryng
The fyre wave of that I gan to wrute
Of quene Annelyda and false Arcyte

Mars ꝑ through his furious course of yre
The olde wrath of Iuno to fulfyll
hath sette the peoples hertes both on fyre
Of Thebes & Grece, & euerych other to kyl
with blody speares neuer rested styl (both
But throng now here now there amõg hem
That euerich other slew so were they wroth

For whan Amphiorar and Tydeus
Ipomedon, and Partynope also
were deed, and slayne proude Campaneus
And whã ꝑ wretched thebans brethrẽ two
were slayne, and kynge Adrastus home ago
So desolate stode Thebes and so bare
That no wyght coude remedye of his care

And whan the olde Creon gan espye
how ꝑ the blode royal was brought adoun
he helde the cite by his tyrannye
And dyd the gentyls of that regroun
To bene his frendes, and dwel in the toun
So what for loue of him, & what for awe
The noble folke were to the towne ydrawe

Amonge al these Annelyda the quene
Of Ermonye, was in that towne dwellyng
That fayrer was than the sunne shene
throughout ꝑ world so gan her name spring
That her to se had euery wyght lykyng
For as of trouth is there none her lyche
Of al the women in thys worlde ryche

Yonge was this quene, of twentye yere olde
Of myddle stature, and of such fayrenesse
That nature had a ioye her to beholde
And for to speken of her stedfastnesse
She passed hath Penelope, and Lucresse
And shortly yf she shal bene comprehended
In her myght nothyng bene amended

This Theban knyght eke soth to sayne
was yonge, & therto wythal a lusty knyght
But he was double in loue & nothing playne
And subtyl in that crafte ouer any wyght
And with his cõnyng wan this lady bught
For so ferforth he gan her trouth allure
That she hym trusteth ouer any creature

what shulde I sayne, she loueth Arcyte so
That whan that he was absent any throwe
Anone her thought her herte brast a two
For in her syght to her he bare him lowe
So that she wende haue al his hert yknow
But he was false, it nas but fayned chere
As nedeth not suche craft men to lere

But neuertheles ful mykel busynesse
Had he, er that he myght hys lady wynne
And swore he wolde dyen for distresse
Or from his witte he sayd he wold twynne
Alas the whyle, for it was routh and synne
That she vpon his sorowes wolde rewe
But nothinge thinketh the false as doth the (trewe
Her fredom founde Arcyte in such manere
That al was his, that she hath much or lite
Ne to no creature made she chere
Further than it lyked to Arcyte (her wyte
There was no lacke, wyth which he myght
She was so ferforth peuen hym to please
That al that lyked him, dyd her ease

There nas to her no maner letter sent
That touched loue, from any maner wyght
That she ne shewed hym or it was brent
So playn she was, and dyd her ful myght
That she nyl hyde nothyng from her knight
Lest he of any vntrouth her vpbreyde
wythout bode his herte she obeyed

And eke he made hym ialous ouer her

That what any man had to her sayde
Anone he wolde prayen her to swere
what was þ̄ wold, or make him yuel apayd
Thā wende she out of her wytte haue brayd
But al was but sleyght and flaterye
wythout loue he sayned iclously

And al this toke she so debonairly
That al his wyl, her thought it skylful thing
And euer the lenger she loued him tenderly
And dyd him honour as he were a kyng
Her herte was to him wedded wyth a ryng
For so ferforth vpon trouth is her entent
That where he goth, her hert with him wēt

whā she shall eate, on hym is so her thought
That wel vmeth of meate toke she kepe
And whan she was to her rest brought
On him she thought alway tyl that she slepe
whan he was absent, purely doth she wepe
Thus lyueth fayre Anneiyda the quene
For false Arcyte, that dyd her al this tene

This false Arcyte, of his newfangleneſſe
For she to him so lowly was and trewe
Toke lesse deyute for her stedfastnesse
And sawe another lady proude and newe
And ryght anone he clad him in her hewe
wote I not whether in white, reed, or grene
And falsed fayre Anneiyda the quene

But neuertheleſſe, great wōder was it none
Though he were false, for it is þ̄ kynd of mā
Syth lameth was, that is so longe agone
To be in loue as false as euer he can
He was the fyrst father that began
To louen two, and was in bigamye
And he founde tentes fyrst, but yf men lye

This false Arcyte, somwhat must he fayne
whan he was false, to coueren his traytorye
Ryght as an horse, þ̄ can both byte & playne
For he bare her in honde of trecherye
And swore he coude her doubleneſſe espye
And al was falseneſſe, that she to hym ment
Thus swore this thefe & forthe his waye he (went

Alas what hert myght endure it
For routh or wo, her sorowe for to tell
Or what man hath the conning or the wyt
Or what mā might within the chābre dwel
If I to him rehersen shal the hell
That suffreth fayre Anneiyda the quene
For false Arcyte, that dyd al thys tene

She wepeth, waylcth, & swoouneth pitously
To grounde deed she falleth as a stone
Crampysheth her lymmes crokedly
She speaketh as her wytte were al agone
Other colour than asshen hath she none
Ne none other word speketh she moch or lite
But mercy cruel hert myne Arcyte

And this endureth, tyl that she was so mate
þ̄ she ne hath foote on which she may sustene
But forth languyshyng euer in this estate
Of which Arcyte hath neyther routh ne tene
His herte was eis where newe and grene
that on her wo, ne deyneth him nat to thinke
Him recketh neuer whether she flete or sinke

Thys newe lady holdeth hym so narowe
Up by the brydel, at the staues ende
That euery worde he dred it as an arowe
Her daunger made him both bowe & bende
And as her lust, made him turne or wende
For she ne graunted him in her lyuyng
No grace, why that he hath hō lyng

But drow hym forth, vnneth lyst her knowe
That he was seruaunt vnto her ladyshyp
Her lesse he were proude, she helde him low
Thus serueth he, wythout meate or syp
She sent him nowe to lande, & now to shyp
And for she gaue him daunger al his fyl
Therfore she had him at her owne wyl

Ensample of this, ye thrifty women all
Take hede of Anneiyda and false Arcyte
That for her lyst him, her dere herte call
And was so meke, therfore he loued her lyte
The kynde of mannes herte is to deiyte
On thyng that straung is, also god me saue
For what they may not get, þ̄ wold they haue

Nowe turne we to Anneiyda ayen
That pyneth day by day in languyshyng
But whan she saw that her ne gate no gayn
Upon a day full sorowfully wepyng
She cast her for to make a complaynyng
And wyth her owne hand she gan it write
And sent it to her theban knyght Arcyte

The

¶ The complaynt of Annelyda to false Arcyte.

SO thrild wyth ỳ poynt
of remembraunce
The swerde of sorowe
whet wt false plesaūce
Myne hert bare of blysse
and blacke of hewe
That turned is to qua-
kyng all my daunce
My suretie in a waped countenaunce
Wyns it auayleth nought to ben trewe
For who so true is, it shal her rewe
That serueth loue, & doth her obseruaunce
Alwaye to one, and chaungeth for no newe

I wote my selfe as wel as any wyght
For I loued one wt al myne hert & myght
More than my selfe an hundred M. syth
And called him my hertes lyfe, my knyght
And was all his, as fetre as it was eyght
And whā ỳ he was glad, than was I blyth
And his disease was my deth as swythe
And he ayen his trouth hath me plyght
For euermore his lady to me kythe.

Nowe is he false alas, and causeleſſe
And of my wo he is so routhleſſe
That wt a worde hym lyst not ones dayne
To bringe ayen my sorowful hert in pees
For he is caught vp in an other lees
Right as him lyst, he laugheth at my payn
And I ne can myne hert not restrayne
For to loue hym yet alway neuertheleſſe
And of al this I not to whom to playne.

And shulde I playne, alas the harde stound
Unto my fo, that haue myne hert a wound
And yet desyreth that myne harme be more
Now certes ferther wol I neuer be founde
None other helpe, my sores for to sounde
My destemy hath shaped so full yore
I woll none other medicine ne lore
I woll ben aye there I was ones bounde
That I haue sayde, be sayde for euermore

Alas, where is become your gentleneſſe
Your wordes full of pleasaunce & humbleſſe
Your obseruaunce in so lowe manere
Your awayting, and your besyneſſe
On me that ye called your mayſtreſſe
Your souerayne lady in this worlde here
Alas, is there neyther worde ne chere
Ye vouchsafe vpon myne heuyneſſe
Alas your loue, I bye it all to dere

Now certes swete, though that ye
Thus causeleſſe the cause be
Of my deedly aduersitie
Your manly reason ought it to respyte
To slee your frende, and namely me
That neuer yet in no degree
Offended you, as wisly he
That all wot of wo my soule quyte.

But for I was so playne Arcyte
In all my workes moche and lyte
And was so besy you to deyte
Myne honour saue, meke, kynde and free
Therfore ye put in me this wyte
Alas, ye recche not a myte
Though that the swerde of sorowe byte
My wofull hert through your cruelte

My swete fo, why do ye so for shame
And thynke ye ỳ furthred be your name
To loue anewe, and ben vntrue aye
And put you in slaundre new and blame
And do to me aduersitie and grame
That loue you moost, god thou wost alway
Yet turne ayen, and yet be playne somedeale
And than shal this ỳ nowis myn ben game
And all forgeue whyle I lyue maye.

Lo hert myne, al this is for to sayne
As whether shall I praye or els playne
Which is the way to done you to be trewe
For eyther mote I haue you in my chayne
Or with the deth ye mote depart vs twayn
There beth none other meane wayes newe
For god so wysely on my soule rewe
As verely ye sleen me with the payne
That now ye sene vnfayned on myne hew

For thus ferforth haue I my deth sought
My selfe I murdre with my priuy thought
For sorowe & routh of your vnkyndneſſe
I wepe, I wayle, I fast, al helpeth nought
I voyde ioye that is to speke of ought
I voyde company, I flye gladneſſe
who may auaunt her better of heuyneſſe
Thā I, and to this plyte haue ye me brought
Without gylte, me nedeth no wytneſſe.

And shulde I play, a weyuen womanhed
Nay rather deth, than do so foule a dede
And as be mercy and gyltlesse, what nede
And yf I playne what lyfe I lede
you recketh not, ꝑ knowe I out of drede
And yf I vnto you myne othes bede
For myne excuse, a scorne shalbe my mede
Your chere floureth, but it wyll not sede
Ful longe agone I myght haue take hede.

For though I had you to morowe agayne
I myght as well holde Aprill from rayne
As holde you to maken stedfast
Almyghty god, of trouth the souerayne
wher is ꝑ trouth of man, who hath it slayne
But he ꝑ hem loueth, shal hem fynde as fast
As in a tempest is a rotten mast
Is that a tame beest, that is aye layne
To renne away, whan he is lest agast

Now mercy swete, yf I mislay
Haue I ought sayde out of the way
I not, my wyt is all away
I fare as doth ꝑ songe of chaunteplure
For now I playne, and now I prey
I am so mased, that I dey
Atreyte hath borne away the key
Of al my worlde, & my good auenture

For in this worlde there nis no creature
walkyng in more discomfyture
Than I, ne more sorowe endure
For yf I slepe a furlonge way or twey
Than thynketh me that your fygure
Before me stant, clad in asure
Eft to profre a newe assure
For to ben true, and mercy me to prey

The longe nyght, this wondre syght ydrye
That on the day for suche a fraye I dye
And of al this right nought twys ye recche
Ne neuermore myne eyen two ben drye
And to your routh, & to your trouth I crye
But welaway, to ferre ben they to fetche
Thus holdeth me my destenie a wretche
But me to rede out of this drede or gye
Ne may my wyt (so wicke is it) not stretche

Than cride I thus, syth I maye do nomore
I yeue it vp, for now and euermore
For I shall neuer efte putten in balaunce
Ay sykernesse, ne lerne of loue the lore
But as ꝑ swan, I haue herde saye full yore
Ayenst his deth woll synge in his penaunce
So synge I here the destenay and chaunce
How that Atreyte Anneleyda so sore
Hath thulled to the poynt of remembraunce.

whan that Anneleda this wofull quene
Hath of her hande wryten in this wyse
with face deed, bewixt pale and grene
She fell a swoune, and sythe she gan to ryse
And vnto Mars a boo werily sacrifyce
within the temple with a sorowful chere
That shapen was, as ye may playnly here.

Explicit.

The assemble of Ladyes.

In September at the falling of the lefe
The fresh season was all togyther done
And of the corne was gathered the shefe
In a garden about noon
Ther wer ladyes walking as was her woon
Foure in nombre, as to my mynde doth fall
And I the fyfth, the symplest of hem all.

Of gentlewomen fayre there were also
Desportyng hem euerychc after her gyse
In crosse alleyes walkyng by two and two
And some alone after her fantasyse
Thus occupyed we were in dyuers wyse
And yet in trouth we were not all alone
Ther were knyghtes & squyres many one

whereof I serued, one of hem asked me
I sayd ayen, as it fell in my thought
To walke about the mase in certaynte
As a woman that nothyng rought
He asked me ayen whom that I sought
And of my colour, why I was so pale
Forsoth (ꝙ I) and therby lyth a tale.

That must we wete (ꝙ he) and that anon
Tel on let se, and make no tarynge
Abyde (ꝙ I) ye ben a hasty one
I let you wete it is no lytle thynge
But for because ye haue a great longyng
In your desyre, this proces for to here
I shal you tell the playne of this matere.

It

It happed thus, that in an after noone
My felowshyp and I by one assent
whan all other besynesses were done
To passe our tyme, into this mase we went
And toke our wayes eche after our entent
Som wēt in ward, & wēt they had gon out
Some stode in ꝑ mid, and loked all about

And soth to say, som wer full ferre behynde
And right anon, as forthwith as the best
Other there were so mased in her mynde
Alwaies wer good for hem both est & west
Thus went they forth & had but lytle rest
And some her corage dyd hem sore assayle
For very wrath they dyd skip ouer ꝑ rayle.

And as they sought hem selfe to and fro
I gate my selfe a lytle auauntage
All forweryed, I myght no ferther go
Thouz I had won right great forz my viage
So came I forth into a strayte passage
which brouzt me to an herber fayre & grene
Made with benches full crafty and clene.

That as me thought, ther myght no crea-
Deuyse a better by a due proporcioun (ture
Safe it was closed well I you ensure
with masonry, of compasse enuyroun
ful secretly with stayres going doun
In myddes ꝑ place wt turning whele cer-
And vpon that a pot of margelayne (tayne

with margaretes growing in ordinaunce
To shew hem self as folke went to and fro
That to beholde it was a great pleasaunce
And how they were accōpanyed with mo
Ne moudlynesse and sourenesse also
The poure pensis were not desloged there
Ne god wot her place was euery where

The flore & bench was paued fayre & smoth
with stones square of many dyuers hewe
So well ioyned, that forto say the soth
It semed one, that none other knewe
And vndereth the streames newe & newe
As syluer bryght springyn in such a wyse
That whēce it came, ye coude it not deuyse

A lytle whyle was I all alone
Beholdyng well this delectable place
My felowship were coming euerychone
So must we now abyde forz a space
Remembryng of many dyuers case
Of tyme passed, with syghes depe
I set me downe, and there I fell aslepe

And as I slept, me thought there came to me
A gentlewoman, meetely of stature
Of great worshyp she semed forz to be
Attyred well, not hyz ly but by measure
Her countenaunce ful sad and demure
Her colours diewe, all that she had vpon
There came no mo but her selfe alone

Her gowne wel was embraudred certaynly
with stones after her owne deuyse
In her purfyl, her worde by and by
(Bien et loyalment) as I coude deuyse
Than prayde I her in any maner wyse
That of her name I myst haue remēbrāce
She sayd, she was called Perseueraunce

So furthermoze to speake was I bolde
wher she dwelled, I prayed her forz to saye
And she agayne full curtesly me tolde
My dwellyng is and hath be many a day
with a lady: what lady I you prayz
Of great estate, thus warne I you (q she)
what call ye her? her name is Loyaltie

In what offyce stande ye, oz in what degree
(q I to her) that wold I were right fayne
I am (q she) vnworthye though I be
Of her chambze her husher in certayne
This rod I beare, as forz a token playne
Lyke as ye knowe the rule in suche seruyce
Appertaynyng is to the same offyce

She charged me by her cōmaundement
To warne you & your felowes euerychone
That ye shuld come there as she is present
Forz a counsayle, which shalbe now anon
Oz seuen dayes be comen and gone
And furthermoze, she bad that I shulde say
Excuse there myght be none, noz delay

An other thyng was not forzget behynde
which in no wyse I wolde but ye knewe
Remēbze well, and beare it in your mynde
Al your felowes & ye must come in diewe
Euery lyche able, your matters forz to sue
with moze, which I pray you thynke vpon
Your wordes on your sleues euerychone

And

And be not abasshed in no maner wyse
As many ben, in suche an hygh presence
Make your request, as ye can best deuyse
And she gladly wyll gyue you audience
There is no grete, nor no maner offence
wherin ye fele that your hert is displeased
But vnto her helpe right sone ye shalbe eased

I am right glad (quod I) ye tell me this
But there is non of vs that knoweth ꝑ way
As of your way (quod she) ye shal not mys
Ye shal haue to gyde you day by day
Of my felowes, I can no better say
Such one as shal tel you ꝑ may full ryght
And Dyligence this gentlewoman hyght

A woman of right famous gouernaunce
And well cherished I tel you in certayne
Her felowshyp shal do you great pleasaunce
Her port is suche, her maner true & playne
She with glad chere wyl do her best payne
To bring you there, now farewel I haue
Abyde sayd I, ye may not go so sone (Done

why so (quod she) and I haue ferre to go
To yeue warnyng in many dyuers place
To your felowes, and so to other mo
And wel ye wot I haue but lytle space
Now yet (quod I) ye must tel me this case
yf we shall any men vnto vs call
Not one (quod she) may come amonges you all

Not one than sayd I, eygh benedicite
what haue I done, I pray you tel me that
Now by my lyfe I trowe but wel (quod she)
But euer I can beleue there is somwhat
And for to say you trouth more can I not
In questyons I may nothyng be to large
I medle no further than my charge

Than thus (quod I) do me to vnderstande
what place is there this lady is dwellynge
Forsoth (quod she) a one sought al this lande
Fayrer is none, though it were for a kynge
Deuysed well, and that in euery thing
The towres hye, full pleasaunt shal ye fynde
with phanes fresh, turning vnto euery wynde

The chambres and parlers of a sorte
vnto bay windowes, goodly as may be thought
As for daunsyng, and other wyse disport
The galeryes right wel ywrought
That wel I wot, yf ye wer thyder brought
And take goodhede therof in euery wyse
Ye wold it thynke a very paradyse

what hight ꝑ place (quod I) now say me that
Pleasaunt regarde (quod she) to tel you playne
Of very trouth (quod I) and wot ye what
It may right well be called so certayne
But furthermore this wold I wyt fayn
what I shulde do as sone as I come there
And after whom I may best enquere.

A gentlewoman, a porter of the yate
Ther shal ye fynde her name is countenaunce
yf ye so hap, ye come early or late
Of her wer good to haue som acquaintaunce
She can you tel, how ye shal you auaunce
And how to come to her ladyes presence
To her wordes I rede you gyue credence.

Now it is tyme I parte you fro
For in good fayth I haue great busynesse
I wot right wel (quod I) that it is so
And I thanke you of your great gentlenesse
Your cõfort hath yeuen me hardynesse
That now I shal be bolde without en fayle
To do after your aduyse & good counsayle

Thus parted she, and I left all alone
with that I sawe as I beheld aside)
A woman come, a very goodly one
And forth rychall as I had her espyde
Me thought anon it shulde be the gyde
And of her name anon I dyd enquere
Ful womanly she gaue me this answere

I am (quod she) a symple creature
Sent fro the court, my name is Dyligence
As sone as I myght come I you ensure
I tarryed not after I had lycence
And nowe that I am come to your presence
Loke what seruyce I can do or may
Cõmaunde me, I can no further say.

I thanked her, & prayed her to come nere
Because I wolde se how she was arayed
Her gown was blew dressed in good maner
with her deuyse, her worde also that sayde
(Tant que ie puis) and I was wel apayed
And than wyst I without en any more
It was full true that I had herde before

Though

Though we toke now before a lytle space
It were full good (quod she) as I coude gesse
How farre (quod I) haue we vnto the place
Of dayes iourney (quod she) but lytle lesse
Wherfore I rede that we outwarde dresse
For I suppose our felowshyp is past
And for nothyng I wold not we were ꝑ last

Thꝰ departed we at ꝑ springyng of ꝑ daye
And forth we went soft and easy pace
Tyl at the last we were on our iourney
So far outwarde, ꝑ we myght se the place
Now let vs rest (quod I) a lytle space
And saye we as deuoutly as we can
Pater noster for layser Julyan

With all my herte I assent with good wyll
Quod she better shal we spede whꝰ we haue
Thꝰ prayed we, and sayd it euery dyl done
And whan the day was past far after none
We sawe a place and thyder came we soone
Which rounde about was closed wꝰ a wall
Semyng to me full lyke an hospitall.

Ther fouꝺ I one had brought al myn aray
(I gentlewoman of myne acquayntaunce)
I haue merueyle (quod I) what maner way
Ye had knowlege of al this ordenaunce
Yes yes (quod she) I herde perseueraunce
How she warned her felowes euerychone
And what aray ye shulde haue vpon

Now for my loue (quod I) this I you praye
Syth ye haue take vpon you all the payne
That ye wold helpe me on with myne aray
For wit ye well I wolde be gone right fayn
Al this prayer nedeth not certayne
(quod she agayne) come of a hye you sone
And ye shall se anon it shalbe done

But this I dout me greatly, wot ye what
That my felowes be passed by and gone
I warne you (quod she) that are they nat
For here they shal assemble euerychone
Notwithstanding I counsayl you anone
Make you redy, and tary you nomore
Tis no harme though ye be there before

So than I dressed me in myne araye
And asked her, whether it were well or no
It is right well (quod she) vnto my paye
Ye nede not care to what place euer ye go
And whyles that she and I debated so
Came Diligence and sawe me al in the we
Sister (quod she) right wel broke ye youre new

Discretion purueyour.

Than went we forth and met at auenture
A yonge woman, an officer semyng
What is your name (quod I) good creature
Discretion (quod she) without lesynge
And where (quod I) is your most abydynge
I haue (quod she) this office of purchace
Chefe purueyour that longeth to this place

Acquayntaunce herbyger.

Fayre loue (quod I) in all your ordenaunce
What is her name that is the herbyger
Forsoth (quod she) her name is acquayntaunce
A woman of right gracious manere
Thꝰ thus quod I, what straugers haue ye here
But fewe quod she, of hygh degree me lowe
Ye be the fyrst, as forforth as I knowe

Countenaunce porter.

Thus wt tales we came streyght to ꝑ gate
This yonge woman departed was & gone
Came Diligence and knocked full therate
Who is without (quod countenaunce) anone
Truly (quod I) fayre syster here is one
Which one quod she, & therwithal she lough
I Diligence, ye knowe me wel ynough

Than opened she the gate and in we go
With wordes fayre she sayd full gently
Ye are welcome ywis, are ye no mo
Not one quod she, saue this woman & I
Now than quod she, I pray you hertily
Take my chambre for a whyle to rest
Tyl your felowes come, I holde it best

I thanked her, and forth we go euerychon
Tyl her chambre without wordes mo
Came diligence and toke her leue anon
Louere euer ye lyst quod I, now may ye go
And I thanke you right heetely also
Of your labour, for which god do you mede
I can nomore, but Jesu be your spede

Than countenaunce asked me anon
Your felowship, where ben they, quod she
Forsoth quod I, they be coming euerychone
But where they are I knowe no certaynte
Without I may hem at this wyndowe se
Here wyl I stande awayting euer amonge
For well I wote they wyll not be longe.

Thus

Thus as I stode musyng full mekly
I thought to take good hede of her aray
Her gowne was blewe, this wot I verely
Of good fasion and furred wel with gray
Upon her sleue her worde this is no nay
which sayd thus, as my penne can endyte
(I moy que ie voy) written wt letters white

Than forthwithal she came streight to me
Your wordes q she, fayn wold I þ I knew
Forsoth quod I, ye shal wel knowe a se
And for my word I haue none, this is trew
It is ynough that my clothing be blewe
As here before I had cómaundement
And so to do I am right wel content

Largesse stewarde.

But tel me this I pray you hertely
The stuarde here say me what is her name
She hight largesse, I saye you surely
A fayre lady and of right noble fame
whan ye her se, ye wyl report the same
And vnder her to byd you welcome all
There is Beleyter marshal of the hall.

Now all this whyle that ye here tary styl
your own maters ye may wel haue in mynd
But tel me this haue ye brought any fyll
Yea yea (quod I) and els I wer behynde
where is there one, tel me that I may fynde
To who þ I may shew my maters playne
Surely q she, vnto the Chamberlayne

Remembraunce Chamberlayne.

The chãberlayne quod I, saye ye trewe
Yea verely quod she, by myne aduyse
Be not aferde, vnto her lowly sewe
Yt shalbe done quod I, as ye deuyse
But ye must know her name in any wyse
Truly (q she) to shewe you in substaunce
Whouten fayning her name is Remẽbraũce.

The secretarye she may not yet be forget
For she doth right moche in euery thynge
wherfore I rede, whan ye haue vt her met
Your mater hole tell her without fayninge
Ye shall her fynde ful good and ful louyng
Tel me her name (q I) of gentilnesse
By my good forth quod she, Inquisitifnesse.

That (quod I) for her is passyng good
For euery fyll and sedule she must se
Now good (q I) come stãd ther as I stode
My felowes be cómyng, yonder they be
Is it iape, or saye ye sothe (quod she)
In iape, nay nay, I saye you for certayne
Se how they come togyder twayne and (twayne

Ye saye ful soth (quod she) that is no naye
I se commyng a goodly company
They ben such fayre quod I, dare I saye
That lyst to iuge thynke it verely
And for my loue I pray you faythfully
At any tyme, whan they vpon me call
That ye woll be good frende to hem all

Of my frendshyp q she, they shall not myst
And for thyr ease to put therto my payne
God yelde it you q I) but take you this
How shal we knowe who is the chãberlayne
þ shal ye well knowe by her worde certayne
what is her word sister, I pray you saye
(Plus ne purroy) thus wyseth she alwaye

Thus as we stode togyther she and I
Euen at the yate my felowes wer echeone
So met I hem, as me thought was goodly
And bade hem welcome all by one and one
Than came forth Countenaunce anon
Full hertely sayde systers all (q she)
Ye be right welcome into this countrie,

I counsayle you to take a lytle rest
In my chambre, yf it be your pleasaunce
whan ye be there me thynke it for the best
That I go in, and call Perseueraunce
Bycause she is of your acquayntaunce
And she also wyll tell you euery thynge
How ye shalbe ruled of your comyng

My felowes al and I, by one aduyse
were wel agreed to do lyke as she sayde
Than we began to dresse vs in our gyse
that folk should say we wer not vnpurueyed
And good wagers amõg vs there we layde
which of vs was attyred moost goodlyest
And of vs al which shulde be praysed best.

The porter came a brought Perseueraunce
She welcõmed vs in curtyse maner
Thynke ye not longe (q she) of youre attẽ
I wol go speke vnto the harbigere (daunce
That she purueye for your lodging here
Than wyll I go vnto the Chamberlayne

Ta

To speke for you, and come anone agayne

And whan she departed was and gone
we sawe folkes comynge wythout the wall
So gret people, that nombre coude we none
Ladyes they were, and gentylwomen all
Clothed in diewe echone her worde wythall
But for to knowe her worde or her deuyse
They came so thycke, ꝑ I ne might i no wyse

Wyth that anone came in Perseueraunce
And where I stode, she came streyght to me
Ye ben (q she) of myne olde acquayntaunce
You to enquere the bolder wolde I be
what worde they bere echo after her degre
I you pray tell it me in secrete wyse
And I shall kepe it close on warantyse

We ben fyue ladyes (q I) all in fere
And gentylwomen foure in company
whan they begynne to open her matere
Than shall ye knowe her wordes by and by
But as for me I haue none verely
And so I tolde Countenaunce here before
All myne aray is diewe, what nedeth more

Nowe than (q she) I woll go agayne
That ye may haue knowleg, what ye shulde
In soth (q I) yt ye wolde take the payne (do
Ye dyd ryght moche for vs, yf ye dyd so
The rather sped the soner may we go
Great cost alway there is in tarynge
And longe to se we it is a very thynge

Than parted she, and came agayne anone
Ye muste (q she) come to the chamberlayne
We be nowe redy (q I) euerychone
To folowe you, whan euer ye lyst certayne
we haue none eloquence to tell you playne
Beseechynge you bee may be so excused
Our trewe meanynge, that it be not refused

Than wente we forth after Perseueraunce
To se the prees it was a wonder cace
There for to passe it was great combraunce
The people stode so thycke in euery place
Nowe stande ye styll (q she) a lytell space
And for your ease somwhat I shall assay
If I can make you any better way

And forth she goth, amonge hem euerychone
Makyng a way, ꝑ we myght through passe
More at our ease, and whan she had so done
She beckende vs to come, where as she was
So after her we folowed more and las
She brought vs streyght vnto ꝑ chãbrelayne
There lefte she vs, and thã she went agayne

We salued her as reason wolde it so
Full humbly besechyng her great goodnesse
In our maters that we had for to do
That she wolde be good lady and maystresse
Ye be welcome (q she) in sothfastnesse
And se what I can do, you for to please
I am redy, that may be to your ease

We folowed her vnto the chambre dore
Systers (q she) come ye in after me
But wete ye well, there was a paued flore
The goodlyest that any wight myght se
And furthermore aboute than loked we
On eche corner, and vpon euery wall
whyche was made of Burell and Crystal

wherin was grauen of storyes many one
Fyrst howe Phyllis, of womanly pyte
Dyed pyteously for loue of Demophone
Nexte after was the story of Tysbe
Howe she slewe her selfe vnder a tree
Yet sawe I more, how in a ryght pytous cace
For Antony was slayne Cleopatras

That other syde was Hawes the shrewe
Full vntrewly deceyued in her bayne
There was also Annelida the quene
Upon Arcyte howe sore she dyd complayne
All these storyes were graued there certayne
And many mo, than I reherce you here
It were to longe to tell you all in fere

And because the walles shone so bright
wyth fyne vmple they were all ouer spradd
To that entẽt folke shuld nat hurt her syght
And through it the storyes myght be radd
Than furthermore I went, as I was radd
And there I sawe wythout any fayle
A chayre set, wyth full ryche apparayle

And fyue stages it was set fro the grounde
Of Calydony full curyously wrought
with foure pomelles of golde, a very rounde
Set wt saphirs, as good as coude be thought
That wote ye what, if it were through sought
As I suppose, fro this countrey to Inde

Another suche it were right harre to fynde

For were ye well, I was ryght nere that
So as I durst, beholdyng by and by
Above there was a ryche cloth of estate
wrought wyth the nedle full straungely
Her worde theron, and thus it sayd trewly
I endure to tell you in wordes fewe
wyth great letters, the better I hem knewe

Thus as we stode, a doze opened anone
A gentyl woman, femely of stature
Berynge a mace, came out her selfe alone
Sothely me thought a goodly creature
She spake nothyng to lowde, I you ensure
Nor hastely, but wyth goodly warnynge
Make rome (q she) my lady is comynge

Wyth that anone I sawe Perseueraunce
Howe she held vp the tapet in her hande
I sawe also in ryght goodly ordenaunce
This great lady within the tapet stande
Comynge outwarde, I woll ye understande
And after her a noble company
I coude nat tell the nombre sykerly

Of theyr names I wolde nothyng enquere
further than suche as we wolde fewe vnto
Saue a lady, whyche was the chauncellere
Attemperaunce sothely her name was so
For vs nedeth wyth her haue moche to do
In our maters, and alwaye more and more
And so forthe to tell you furthermore

Of thys lady, her beaute to discryue
My connynge is to symple verely
For neuer yet the dayes of my lyue
So inly fayre I haue sene none trewly
In her estate assured vtterly
There wanted naught, I dare well assure
That longed to a goodly creature

And furthermore to speke of her array
I shall you tell the maner of her gowne
Of clothe of golde, full ryche it is no nay
The coloure blewe of a ryght goodly facyon
In taberde wyse, the sleues hangyng adown
And what purfyl there was, & in what wyse
So as I can I shall it you deuyse

After a sorte, the coller and the breste
Lyke as Armyne is made in purfelynge
wyth great perles full fyne and orient

They were couched all after one worchynge
wyth diamondes in stede of powderynge
The sleues and purfell of allyse
They were made lyke in euery wyse

Aboute her necke a sorte of fayre rubyes
In whyte floures of ryght fyne enamayle
Upon her heed set in the fayriest wyse
A cercle of great balays of entayle
That in ernest to speke wythout fayle
For yonge and olde, and euery maner age
It was a worlde to loken on her vysage

Thus comynge forthe to fyt in her estate
In her presence we kneled down euerychone
Presentynge our billes, and wote ye what
Full humbly she toke hem by one and one
whan we had done, than came they al anone
And dyd the same eche after her maniere
Kneling at ones, and eyther all in fere

And whā this was don, & she set in her place
The chamberlayne she dyd vnto her call
And she goodly comyng vnto her a pace
Of her entent knowyng nothyng at all
Cloyde backe the preace (q she) vp to the wal
Make large roume, but loke ye do not tary
And take these billes to the secretarye

The chamberlayne dyde her cōmaundement
And came agayne, as she was byd to do
The secretarye there beyng present
The billes were delyuered her also
Not onely ours, but many other mo
Than the lady wyth good aduyce agayne
Anone wythall, called her chamberlayne

We woll (q she) the fyrst thyng that ye do
The secretarye ye do make come anone
wyth her billes, and thus we wyll also
In our presence she rede hem euerychon
That we maye take good aduyce theron
Of the ladyes that ben of oure counsayle
Loke thys be done, wythouten any fayle

Whan the chamberlayne wyste of her entēt
Anon she dyd the secretarye call
Let your billes (q she) be here present
My lady it wyll: Madame (q she) I shall
And in presence she wyll ye hem call
Wyth good wyll I am redy (q she)
At her pleasure, whan she cōmaundeth me

And vpon

And vpon that was made an ordynaunce
They ꝑ came fyrst her billes shulde be redde
Full gentelly than sayd Perseueraunce
Rayson it wyll they were soneste spedde
Anone wythall, vpon a tapet spredde
The secretarye layde hem downe echone
Our billes fyrst she redde one by one

The fyrst lady bearyng in her deuyse
Sans que iamays, thus wrote she on her byl
Complaynyng sore, and in full pytous wyse
Of promesse made, with kaythful hert & wyl
And so bicken avenst all maner skyll
wythout deserte, alwayes on her partye
In thys matter, desyryng a remedy

Her nexte folowyng, her word was i this wise
(Ung sanz chaunger) & thus she dyd cõplayne
though she had be guerdoned for her seruice
yet nothynge lyke as she that toke the payne
wherfore she coude in no wyse her restrayne
But in thys case sewe vntyll her presence
As reason wolde to haue recompence

So furthermore, to speke of other twayne
One of hem wrote after her fantasy
(Uncques puis leuer) & for to tel you playne
Her complaynt was full pytous verely
For as she sayd, there was great reason why
As I can remembre thys matere
I shall you tell the processe all in fere

Her byl was made complaynyng in her grise
That of her ioy, her comforte and gladnesse
was no surete, for in no maner wyse
She sayd therin no poynt of stablenesse
Nowe yll nowe wele, out of all sykernesse
Full humbly desyryng of her hygh grace
Soone to shewe her remedy in thys case

Her felawe made her byll, and thus she sayd
In playnynge wyse there as she loued best
whether she were wrothe or wele apayde
She might nat se whan she wolde fayneste
And wrothe she was in verye ernest
To tell her worde, as forforth as I wote
(Entierment vostre) right thus she wrote

And vpon that she made a great request
wyth herte and wyl, & all that might be done
As vntyll her that might redresse it best
For in her mynd there might she fynd it sone
The remedy of that whych was her boone
Rehersynge that she had sayd before
Besechynge her it myght be so nomore

And in lyke wyse as they had done before
The gentyl women of our company
Put her billes, and for to tell you more
One of hem wrote (cest sanz dire) verely
And her matere hole to specify
wyth in her byll she put it in writynge
And what it sayd, ye shall haue knowynge

It sayd god wote, and that ful pytously
Lyke as she was disposed in her herte
No myssortune that she toke greuously
Al one to her was the ioy and smerte
Somtyme no thanke for al her good deserte
Other comforte she wanted non comynge
And so vsed, it greued her nothynge

Desyrynge her, and lowly besechynge
That she wolde for her seke a better way
As she that had ben her dayes lyuynge
Stedfast and trewe, and wylbe alway
Of her felawe, somwhat I shal you saye
whose byl was red nerte forthe withal
And what it ment, reherse you I shal

(En dieu est) she wrote in her deuyse
And thus she sayd without en fayle
Her trouthe myght be take in no wyse
like as she thought, wherfore she had merualle
For trouth sõtyme was wont to take auayle
In euery matere, but al that is ago
The more pyte that it is suffred so

Moche more there was, wherof she shuld cõ
But she thought it to gret encõbraũce (playn
So moche to wryte, and therfore in certayn
In god and her she put al her affiaunce
As in her worde is made a remembraunce
Besechyng her, that she wolde in this cace
Shewe vnto her the fauour of her grace

The thirde she wrote rehersyng her greuaũce
Yea, wote ye what a pitous thyng to here
For as me thought she felte great displesaũce
One myght right wel perceyue it by her chere
And no wonder, it sate her pallynge nere
Yet lothe she was to put it in wrytynge
But nede wol haue sourse in euery thinge

(Goyes enclure) this was her word certayne
And thus she wrote in a lytell space
There she lowed, her labour was in vayne
For he was set all in another place
Full humbly desyrynge in that case
Some good comforte her sorowe to appese
That she myght lyue more at hertes ease

The fourth surely me thought she liked wele
As in her porte, and in her behauynge
And (bien moneste) as farre as I coude fele
That was her word tyll her welbelongynge
wherfore to her she prayed aboue all thynge
Full hertely to say you in substaunce
That she wolde sende her good continuaunce

Ye haue rehersed me these bylles all
But nowe let se somwhat of your entent
It may so hap, paraventure ye shall
Nowe I pray you whyle I am here present
Ye shall haue knowlege parde what I ment
But thus I say, in trouthe I make no fable
The case it selfe is inly lamentable

And well I wote ye woll thynke the same
Lyke as I say, whan ye haue herde my byll
Now good tell on, I hate you by saint Jame
Abyde a whyle it is nat yet my wyll
Yet muste ye wete by reason and by skyll
Syth ye haue knowlege of ỳ was don before
And thus it is sayd without wordes more

Nothynge so lefe as dethe to come to me
For fynall ende of my sorowes and payne
What shulde I more desyre as seme ye
And ye knewe al aforne it for certayne
I wote ye wolde, and for to tell you playne
without her helpe that hath all thyng in cure
I can nat thynke that it may longe endure

As for my trouthe it hath beplonged wele
To say the sothe, I can say no more
Of full longe tyme and suffred euery dele
In patience, and kepe it all in store
Of her goodnelle, beseechynge her therfore
That I myght haue my thanke in such wyse
As my deserte serueth of iustyse

Whan these bylles were rad euerychone
The ladyes toke a good aduysement
And hem to answere by one and one
She thought it was to moche in her entent
wherfore she yaue hem commaundement
In her presence to come bothe one and all
To yeue hem her answere in generall

What dyd she than suppose ye verely
She spake her selfe, and sayd in this maniere
we haue well sene your bylles by and by
And some of hem pytous for to here
we wol therfore ye knowe all thys infere
wythin shorte tyme, our courte of parlyment
Here shall be holde in our palays present

And in all thys, wherin ye fynde you greued
There shall ye fynde an open remedy
In suche wyse as ye shall be relieued
Of all that ye rehersse here throughly
As for the date ye shall knowe verely
That ye may haue a space in your comyng
For dyligence shall it tell you by wrytyng

We thanked her in our moste humble wyse
Our felaushyp, eche one by one assente
Submyttyng vs lowly tyll her seruyse
For as we thought, we had your trauayle spent
In suche wyse as we helde vs contente
Than eche of vs toke other by the sleue
And forth withal, as we shulde take our leue

All sodaynly the water sprange anone
In my vsage, and therwythall I woke
where am I nowe thought I, al this is gone
All mased, and vp I gan to loke
with that anone I went and made this boke
Thus symply rehersyng the substaunce
Because it shulde not be out of remembraunce

Nowe verily your dreame is passyng good
And worthy to be had in remembraunce
For though I stande here as long as I stode
It shulde to me be none encombraunce
I toke therin so inly great pleasaunce
But tell me nowe what ye the boke do call
For I must wete: vp right good wyll ye shall

As for thys boke, to say you very ryght
Of the name to tell you in certaynte
L'assemble de dames, thus it hyght
Nowe thynke ye: that name is good parde
Nowe go farewell, for they call after me
My felawes all, and I muste after sone
Rede wel my dreme, for now my tale is done

FINIS.

The

The conclusions of the Astrolabie.

Lytell Lowys my sonne, I perceyue well by certayne euydences thyne abilite to lerne sciences, touchyng nombres, and proporcions: and also wel considre I thy besye prayer in especyall to lerne the tretyse of the Astrolabe. Than for as moche as a philosopher sayth he wrappeth hym in hys frēde, that cōmytteth to the ryghtfull prayers of hys frende: Therfore I haue geuen the a sufficyent Astrolaby for our orizonte compowned after the latytude of Oxenford: vpon ỹ whiche by medyacyon of thys lytell treatyse, I purpose to teache the a certayne nombre of conclusyons pertaynyng to this same instrument. I saye a certayne of conclusyons for thre causes. the fyrst cause is this. Truste wel that all the conclusyons that haue be foundē, or els possybleye myght be founde in so noble an instrument as is the Astrolabye, ben vnknowen perfytely to any mortall man in this regyon as I suppose. Another cause is thys, that sothlye in any cartes of the Astrolabye that I haue sene, there ben some conclusyons, that wyll not in all thynges performe her bybestes: and some of hem ben to harde to thy tender age of ten yere to conceyue. This tretyse deuyded in fyue partes wyll I shewe the wonder lyght rules and naked wordes in englisshe, for latyn ne canste thou yet but smale, my lytell sonne. But neuer the lesse sufficyeth to the these trewe conclusyons in englysshe, as well as sufficyseth to thys noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusyons in greke, and to arabyens in arabyke, and to iewes in hebrewe, & to the Latyn folke in Latyn: which Latyne folke had hem fyrste out of other dyuers langages, and wryte hem in her owne tonge, that hys to sayne in Latyne.

And god wote that in all these languages and in manye mo, haue these conclusyons ben sufficyently lerned and taught, and yet by dyuers rules, ryght as dyuers pathes leadē dyuers folke the ryght waye to Rome.

Nowe woll I praye mekely euery person discrete, that redeth or herith thys lytell treatyse, to haue my rude entendyng excused and my superfluyte of wordes, for two causes. The fyrst cause is, for that curyous endytyng and harde sentences is full heuy at ones, for suche a chylde to lerne. And the seconde cause is thys, that sothly me semeth better to wryten vnto a chylde twyse a good sentence, than he forgette it ones. And Lowis if it so be that I shewe the in my lyth Englysshe, as trewe conclusyons, touchynge thys mater, and not onely as trewe, but as many and subtyll conclusyons as ben yshewed in Latyne in anye commune tretyse of the Astrolabye, comme me the more thanke, and praye God saue the kyng that is lorde of thys language, and all that hym faythe beareth, and obeyeth euerych in hys degre, the more and the lasse. But considereth well, that I ne vsurpe not to haue founden thys werke of my labour or of myne engyne, I nam but a lewde compylatour of the labour of olde Astrologiens, and haue it translated in myne Englysshe onelye for thy doctryne: and wyth thys swerde shal I slen enuye.

¶ The fyrste partye.

The fyrste partye of this tretyse shall reherce the names and the membres of thyne Astrolabye, bycause that thou shalte haue the greater knowynge of thyne owne instrument.

¶ The seconde partye.

¶ The seconde partye shall teche the to werken the very practyke of the forsayde conclusyons as forthe and all so narowe as may be shewed in so smale an instrument portatyse aboute. For wel wote euery astrologien, that smalleste fractions ne wol not be shewed in so smal an instrument, as in subtyll tables calculed for a cause.

¶ The thyrde partye.

¶ The thirde party shal contayne dyuers tables of longytudes and latytudes of sterres, fyxe in the Astrolabye. And tables of the declinacyons of the sunne, and tables of the lon-

gytude of cytes and townes. And tables as well for the gouernacyon of the cloche, as for to fynde the altitude meridyan, and many an other notable cõclusyon after the kalenders of the reuerent clerkes frere John Som. and frere N. Lenne.

¶ The fourth partye.

¶ The fourth partye shall be a theorike to declare the meanynge of the celestyall bodyes, wyth the causes, the whyche the fourth partye in specyal shall shewe in a table of the beye meuynge of the moone frome one to one euerye day and euery sygne, after thyne Almanake. Upon the whyche table there foloweth a canone, suffycyent to teache as well in maner of worksynge in the same conclusyons, as to knowe in oure orysonte, wyth whyche degre of zodiac the syoone arysseth in anye latytude, and the arysynge in anye planets after hys latytude fro the ecliptyke lyne.

¶ The fyfte partye.

¶ The fyfthe partye shall ben an introductorye after the statutes of oure Doctours, on whyche thou mayste lerne a great parte of the generall rules of theorike in Astrologye. In whyche fyfthe partye thou shalt fynde tables of equacyons of houses, after the latitude of Orenforde, and tables of dignytees of planettes, and other notefull thynges, yf god vouchsafe & hys mother the mayden, mo than I behyte.

¶ The ryngе.

¶ Thy Astrolabye hath a ryngе to putten on thy thombe on thy ryght honde, in takyng of the heyght of thynges. And take kepe, frome hence forwarde I woll cleape the heyght of heuy thynge, that is take by the rule, the altytude wythouten mo wordes.

¶ The turet.

¶ Thys ryngе renneth in a maner of a turet fastned to the moder of thyne Astrolabye, in a roume a space that it dystroubeleth not the instrument to hangen after hys ryght centure.

The moder of thyne Astrolabye is thickest by the brinkes, that is the vtmoste ryng with degrees: and al the myddle wythin the ryngе shall be thynner, to receyue the plates for dyuers clymates, and also for the rethe, that is shape in maner of a nette, or els after the webbe of a loppe.

¶ The moder.

¶ The moder of thyne Astrolaby is the thickest plate perced wyth a large hole, that receyueth in her woombe the thynne plates compowned of dyuers clymates, and thy rete shapen in maner of a nette or of a webbe of a loppe.

¶ Of the foure lynes.

¶ Thys moder is deuyded on the backhalfe wyth a lyne, that cometh descendynge fro the ryngе downe to the nethereste bordure, the whyche lyne, fro the forsayd ryngе vnto the centre of the large hole amydde, is cleped south lyne, or els the lyne merydionall: And the remenaunt of this lyne downe to the bordure is cleped the northe lyne, or all the lyne of the mydnight.

¶ Of foure lynes Est, West, Northe, and Southe.

Ouerthwarte thys forsayd longe lyne there crosseth hym another lyne of the same length fro Est to West, of the whyche lyne frome a lytell crosse in the bordure vnto the centure of the large hole, is cleped the Est lyne, or els the lyne oriental: and the remenaunt of the lyne fro the forsayd Orientall vnto the bordure, is ycleped the west lyne, or the lyne occidentall. ¶ Nowe hast thou here the foure quarters of thyn Astrolabye, deuyded after the foure principal plages or quarters of the fyrmament.

¶ Whyche is the ryght syde, and whyche is the lyfte.

The Est syde of the Astrolabye is cleaped the ryght syde, and the weste syde is cleaped the lyft syde. Forget not this lytel lowys. But ȝ ryngе of thyne Astrolabye vpon the thombe of thy ryght hande, and than wyl hys ryght syde by towarde thy lyfte syde, and hys lyfte syde woll be towarde thy ryght syde. Take thys rule generall as well on the backe as on the woombe syde. Upon the ende of thys Est lyne (as I fyrste sayde) is ymarked a lytell crosse, where as euermore generallye is consydred the entrynge of the Est degre, in the whyche the sunne arysseth.

¶ The

¶ The degrees fro the Est lyne to the South.

FRo the lytell crosse vp to the ende of the meridionall lyne vnder the ryngе shalte thou fynde the bordure, deuyded with.cc.degrees, and by that same proporcio is euery quarter of thyn Astrolaby deuyded, ouer ꝑ which degrees there ben nombres of augrym, that deuyden thylke same degrees fro.v.to.v. as sheweth by lõge strykes betwen: of ꝑ which longe strykes the space betwene conteyneth a myle waye, and euery degree of thylke bordure cõteyneth foure minutes, that is to say, foure mynutes of an houre.

¶ Of the twelue sygnes, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, and the other.

VNder the cõpas of thilke degrees ben wrytten the names of the twelue signes, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cãcer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagitarius, Capricornus, Aquaries, and pisces. And ꝑ nombres of the degrees of the sygnes ben wrytte in augrym aboue, and wyth longe diuysions from fyue to fyue, deuydeth from the tyme that ꝑ signe entreth vnto the laste ende. But vnderstande wel, that these degrees of signes ben euerych of hem consydred of.lx.mynutes, and euerye mynute of.lx.secondes, & so forth into smale fractions infynite, as sayth Alcabucius. And therfore knowe well that a degre of the bordure conteyneth.iiii.mynutes, and a degre of a sygne contayneth.lx.mynutes, & haue thys in mynde.

¶ The cercle of the dayes.

NExte thys foloweth the cercle of the dayes, that ben sygured in maner of the degrees, that conteynen in nombre.CCCLxv.deuyded also wyth longe strykes from.v.to.v. and the nõbres of augrim wrytten vnder the cercle.

¶ The cercle of the.xii.monethes.

NExte the cercle of dayes foloweth the cercle of the.xii.names of the monethes, that is to say, Januarius, Februarius, Marcius, Aprill, Maius, Junius, Julius, Auguste, September, October, Nouember, December. The names of these mõthes taken her names, some for properties & some by statutes of emperours, and some by other lordes of Rome. Eke of these mõthes, as lyked to Julius Cesar and Cesar Augustus, some were ycompowned of dyuers nõbres of dayes, as July & August. Then hath Januarius.xxxi.dayes. Februarius.xxviii. Marcius.xxxi. April.xxx. May.xxxi. Junius xxx. August.xxxi. September.xxx. October, xxxi. Nouember.xxx. December.xxxi. Nathelesse all though that Julius Cesar toke two dayes out of Feuerye and put hem in hys month of July, and Augustus Cesar cleped the moneth of Auguste after hys name, and ordeyned it of.xxxi.dayes, yet truste well that the sunne dwelleth therfore neuer the more ne the lasse in one sygne then in another.

¶ The names of the holy dayes.

Then foloweth the names of the holy dayes in the kalender, and nexte hem ꝑ letters A.B.C. on whych they fallen.

¶ The scale of the Astrolabye.

NExt the forsayd cercle of the A.B.C vnder the crosse lyne is marked the scale, in maner of two squyres, or elis in maner of ledders that serueth by hys xviii. poyntes, and hys dyuysions of full many subtyll conclusyon of thys forsayde scale: For the crosse lyne vnto the very angle is cleped Umbra recta, or elis vmbra extensa, and the nether party vmbra versa.

¶ The rule.

Then hast thou a brode rule that hath on euery ende a square plate, parted wyth certayne holes, some more and some lesse, to receyuen the streames of the sunne by day, and eke by mediacion of thyne eye, to knowe the altytude of the sterres by nyght.

¶ The pyn, whych is ymagined to be pole artyke and the horse.

Then is there a large pyn in maner of an

erytre, that goth thorowe the hole that halt the tables of the clymathes in ꝑ teeth, in the wombe of the mother, thorow whych pynne there goeth a lytel wedge, the whyche is cleped the horse, that straineth all the partes to gether. Thys forsayd great pynne in maner of an erytre, is ymagende to be pole artyke in thyne Astrolabye.

¶ For lynes on the wombe syde.

The wombe syde of thyne Astrolabye is also deuyded wt a longe crosse in foure quarters from Est to west, frō South to North from ryght syde to left syde, as is ꝑ backsyde.

¶ The degrees of the wombe syde.

The border of the whych wombe syde is deuyded fro the poynte of the Estlyne vnto the poynte of the South lyne vnder ꝑ tynge in xc. degrees, and by the same proporcion is euery quarter deuyded, as is the backsyde, that amounteth CCC lx degrees. And vnder stande well that the degrees of thys border bene answerynge and consentynge to the degrees of equinoctiall that is deuyded in the same nombre, as euerye other cercle is in the hye heauen. Thys border is deuided also wyth xxiiii letters, and a smale crosse aboue the south lyne that sheweth the xxiiii houres equales of the clocke. And I haue sayde .b. of these degrees maken a myle waye, and thre myle waye maken an houre, and euery degre of thys border conteyneth iiii mynutes, and euery mynute lx secōdes. Nowe haue I told the twyse and for the more declaration.

¶ Of the thre principall cercles.

The plate vnder the rete is dyscryued wt thre cercles, of which the lest is cleped the cercle of Cancer, bycause that the heed of Cancer turneth euermore cō centryke vpon the same cercle. In thys halfe of Cancer is the greatest declinacion northewarde of the sonne, and therfore is he yclypped Solsticium of sommer, whych declinacion after Ptholome, is xxiii. degrees and .l. minutes, as well in Cancer as in Capricorne. Thys sygne of Cancer is cleped the tropyke of sommer of tropos, that is to sayne ayenwarde. The mydle cercle in wydnesse of this iii. is cleped ꝑ cercle equinoctial, vpon which turneth euer more ꝑ heedes of Aries and Libra. And vnderstande well, that euermore thys cercle equinoctiall turneth iustly fro the eye Est to west, west, as I haue shewed in the sphere solide. Thys same cercle is cleped also the wayer of the daye, for when ꝑ sunne is in the hedde of Aries and Libra, then bene dayes and nyghtes lyke of lengthe in all the worlde, and therfore bene these two sygnes called equinoctis. And all that moueth wyth in these heedes of Aries and Libra, is ycalled northwarde, and all that moueth wythoute these heedes, hys meuynge is cleped Southwarde, as for ꝑ equinoctiall, take kepe of the latytudes North and South, & forget it not By thys cercle equinoctial ben considred the xxiiii houres of the clocke, for euermore the reysynge of xv degrees of the equinoctial maketh an houre equal of the clocke. Thys equinoctiall is cleped the mydwaye of the fyrste meuynge or ris of the sunne. And note that the fyrst meuynge is cleped meuynge of the fyrst mouable of the eyght sphere, whych meuynge is fro Est to weste, and agayne into Est. Also it is cleped gyrdell of the fyrst meuyng, for it departeth the fyrst mouable that is to sayne the sphere in two like parties euydystante fro the poles of thys worlde. The wydest of these thre cercles principall is cleped ꝑ cercle of Capricorne, and turneth euermore concentryke vpon the same cercle. In the heed of thys forsayd Capricorne is ꝑ greatest declinacyon Southwarde of the sunne, and therfore it is cleped Solsticium of wynter. Thys sygne of Capricorne is also cleped the tropyke of wynter, for then begynneth ꝑ sunne to come agayne to vs warde.

¶ Of the almicanteras, the sygnet, and what is thyne orizonte.

Vpon thys forsayde plate ben compassed certayne cercles that hyghten almicanteras: of whyche some of hem semen parfyte cercles, and some semen imparfyte. The centure that standeth amyddes the narowest cercle is cleped the sygnet. And the nerherest cercle, that deuydeth the two emysperies that is the partye of the heauen aboue the erth, and the partie byneth.

These

These almicãteras ben compowned by two
or two, all be it so that on dyuers astrolabies
some almycanteras ben deuyded by one, and
some by two, and some by thre, after ꝑ quan-
tyte of the Astrolabye. Thys forezayd signet
is ymagined to be the verye poynte ouer the
crowne of thy heed, and also thys sygnet is
the very pole of the orizonte in euery region.

¶ What ben thyne azimutes.

From thys sygnet (as it semeth) there co-
men croked strykes, lyke to the clawes of a
leppe, or els lyke to ꝑ werk of a womás calle
in kernynge ouerthwarte the almycanteras,
and these same strykes or dryuysions ben cle-
ped Azimutes, and they deuyden the orizon-
tes on thyne Astrolabye in .xxiiii. dryuysions.
And these azimutes serue to know the costes
of the fyrmament, and to other conclusyons,
as for to knowe the sygnet of the sunne and
of euery sterre.

¶ Of the .xii. houres of the planetes.

Serue these azimutes, vnder the cer-
cle of Cãcer, ben the .xii. dryuysions
embolyde, moche lyke to the shap
of the azimutes that shewen the
spaces of houres of planetes.

¶ Thy reete or els thy zodiake.

Thy reete of thyn Astrolabe which
is thy zodiake shapen in maner of
a nette or of a loppe webbe, after ꝑ
olde dyscripcyon, wbych ꝑ mayste
turne vp and downe as thy selfe lyketh, con-
teyneth certayne nõbre of sterres fyxe, wyth
her longitudes and Latitudes determinate, yf
so be that the maker haue not erred. The na-
mes of the sterres ben wrytten in the margin
of thy reete there they syt, of the wbych ster-
res the smale poynte is cleped the centure.
And vnderstande, that all the sterres syttyng
wythin the zodiake of thyne astrolabye, bene
cleped sterres of the north, for they aryse by
the north eest lyne, and all ꝑ remnaunt fyxes
out of the zodiake, ben cleped sterres of the
southe, but I saye not that they aryse all by
the south eest lyne, wytnesse of Aldebarã and
also Algomysa. Generally vnderstande thys
rule, that thylke sterres that bene cleped ster-
res of ꝑ north, aryse rather thẽ the degre of
her longitude, and all the sterres of the south
aryse after the degree of her longitude, that
is to sayne, sterres in thyne astrolabye. The
measure of longitude of sterres taken in the
lyne ecliptyke of heauen, vnder ꝑ wbych lyne
when that the sunne and the moone ben lyne
tyght, els in the superfycie of thys lyne, then
is the eclyps of the sunne or of the moone, as
I shall declare eke the cause why: but soth-
ly the ecliptike lyne of thy zodyake is the ve-
rest bordure of ꝑ zodiake there thy degrees
bene marked. The zodiake of thy astrolaby is
shapen as a compace, wbych that conteyneth
a large brede, as after the quantyte of thy a-
strolabye, in ensemple that the zodyake of he-
uen is ymagyned to be a superfycyes conteyn-
ynge the latitude of .12. sygnes, where as al
the remnaunt of cercles in heauen ben yma-
gyned very lynes wythouten any latytude a-
myddes the celestyall zodiake is ymagyned
a lyne, wbych that is cleped ꝑ ecliptyke lyne
vnder the wbych lyne is euermore the wave
of the sunne. Thus ben there .6. degrees of the
zodiake of that one syde of the lyne, and .6. de-
grees on that other. The zodiake is deuyded
in .12. principall deuysyons, that departen
the .12. sygnes, and for ꝑ straytnesse of thyne
astrolabye, then is euery smale dyuysyon in a
sygne yparted by two degrees and two. I
meane degrees conteynynge .60. mynutes.
thys forsayd heuenyssh zodiake is cleped the
cercle of the sygnes, or the cercle of bestes.
For zodiake in language of greke sowneth
bestes in laten tonge, and in the zodiake ben
the .12. sygnes that haue names of bestes,
bycause when the sunne entreth in any of the
sygnes, he taketh the propertie of suche bes-
tes, or els for that the sterres that ben there
ben fyred ben disposed in sygne of bestes or
shape lyke bestes, or els whan the planettes
ben vnder the signes they trãsmue vs by her
influences, operacions, and effectes, lyke to
operacions of bestes: And vnderstande also,
that whan an hote planet cometh in to an
hote signe, thã entreth his hete, and if a pla-
net be colde, than amenuseth his coldenesse,
bycause of the hotte sygne: And by this con-
clusyon mayst thou taken ensample in al syg-
nes, be they moiste or drye, mouable or fyxe,
reckenynge the qualyte of the planettes as

I

I hyde sayd. And euerych of these 12 sygnes hath relacyon to a certayne parcel of the body of a man, and hath it in gouernaunce: as Aries hath thyne heed, and Taurus thy neche and thy throte, Gemini thyne arme holes & thyne armes, and so forth, as shalbe shewed more playnly in the fyfth partye of thys treatyse. The zodiake the whyche is partie of the eyght sphere, ouerberueth the equinoctiall, & he ouerberueth hym agayne in euen partes, and that one halfe declyneth southwarde, & that other northwarde, as playnly declareth the treatyse of the sphere.

¶ The label.

Then haste thou a label that is shapen lyke a rule, saue that it is streyght and hathe no plates on eyther ende, but wyth the smale poynte of the forsayde label shalte thou calcule the equacions in þ bordure of thyne Astrolabye as by thyne almury.

¶ The almury, the dentycle of Capricorne, or els the calculere.

Thyne almury is cleped the dētycle of Capricorne, or els the calculere, thys same almury set fyrst in the heed of Capricorne, and it serueth of many a necessary cōclusion in equacion of thynges, as shalbe shewed.

¶ Here begynne the conclusyons of thyne Astrolabye to fynde the degre in the whych the sunne is day by day, after hys course aboute.

Reckon and knowe which is the day of the moneth, and lay thy rule vpō the same daye, and then woll the very poynte of thy rule verely sytten on the bordure vpon the degre of the sonne. Ensample as thus. The yere of our lord 1391 þ 12 day of Marche at myddaye, I wolde knowe the degre of the sunne, I sought in the backhalf of myne Astrolabye, and founde the cercle of the dayes the whych I knewe by the names of the monthes writte vnder the same cercle: tho layde I my rule ouer the forsayd daye, and founde the poynte of my rule in the border vpō the fyrst degre of Aries, a lytel within the degree: and thus knewe I this conclusyon. Another daye I wolde knowe þ degre of my sunne, and thys was at myddaye in the 13 daye of Decembre, I founde the day of the moneth in maner as I sayd: tho layde I my rule vpon the forsayd 13 daye, and founde the poynte of my rule vpō the fyrst degree of Capricorne, a lytell wythin the degre, and then had I of this conclusion the very experience.

¶ To knowe the altytude of the sunne eyther of celestiall bodyes.

Put the ryngе of thyne Astrolabye vpon thy eyght thombe, and tourne thy lyfte syde againe the light of þ sunne and remeue thy rule vp and downe tyll the streame of the sunne shyne thorowe both holes of the rule: Loke then howe many degrees thys rule is areysed fro the lytel crosse vpō the rest lyne, and take there the altytude of thy sunne: and in thys same wyse mayste thou knowe by nyght þ altytude of þ moone or of the bryght sterres. Thys chapiter is so generall euer in one þ there nedeth no more declaracion, but forget it not.

¶ To knowe the degree of the sunne and of thy zodiake, by the daye in the backsyde of thyne Astrolabye.

Then yf thou wylte wete the tokenynge to knowe whyche is the daye in thy calender of the moneth that thou arte in, laye thyne Astrolabye, that is to saye the alhydatha, vpon the daye in the calender of thyne Astrolabye, and he shall shewe the thy degree of the sunne.

¶ To know euery tyme of the daye by lyght of the sunne, & euery tyme of the nyght by the sterres fyxe, & eke to knowe by nyght or by daye the gree of the sygne that ascendeth on the rest orizont, whych is cleped comenly ascendent.

Take the altytude of the sun when the lyste, as I haue sayde and set the degre of the sunne (in case that it be before the myddle of the daye) amonge thyne Almucanteras

on

on the eest syde of thyne astrolabye: and yf it be after the mydle of the day, set the degre of the sunne vpon the west syde. Take thys maner of settynge for a generall rule ones for euer. And when thou hast yset the degre of the sunne vpon as many almycanteras of heyght as was the sunne, taken by thy rule, lay ouer thy label vpon the degre of the sunne, & then woll the poynte of the label syttен in the bordure vpon the very tyde of the daye. Ensample of thys. The yere of our lorde 1391 the 12 day of Marche, I wolde knowe the tyde of the daye, I toke the altitude of my sunne, & founde that it was 25 degrees, and 30 myn-utes of heyght of the bordure in the backsyde, tho turned I myne astrolabye, and bycause it was before mydday I turned my rete, & set the degre of the sunne, that is to saye, the fyrst degre of Aries in the right syde in myne astrolabye, vpon the 25 degree and 30 myn-utes of heyght amonge my almycanteras: Tho layde I my label vpō the degree of my sunne and founde the poynte of my label in the bordure on the capitale letter, that is cleped an L. Tho reckened I all the capitall let-ters fro the lyne of mydnyght vnto the forsayd letter L and founde it was 9 of the clocke of the daye. Tho loked I ouer my eest orizont & founde there the 12 degre of Gemmus ascē-dynge, whych that I toke for myne ascendēt and in thys wyse had I the experience for e-uermore in whych maner I shulde knowe the tyde of the daye, and eke myne ascendēt. Tho wolde I wete that same nyght folowynge the houre of the nyght, and wrought in thys wyse: amōge an heape of sterres it lyked me to take the altytude of the fayre whyte sterre that is cleaped the Alhabor, and foude her syt-tynge on the weste syde of the lyne of mydde day 18 degrees of heyght, taken by my rule on the backsyde. Tho set I the cēture of thys alhabor vpon 18 degrees amonge my almy-canteras vpon the weste syde, bycause that he was founde vpon the weste syde: Tho layde I my label ouer the degree of the sunne, that was dyscended vnder the weste orizont, and reckened al the letters capitalles fro the lyne of mydday vnto the poynte of my label in the bordure, and founde that it was after noone, passed 7 of the clocke the space of 11 degrees. Tho loked I downe vpon my eest orizonte, & foude there 20 degrees of Libra ascendyng whome I toke for myne ascendent, and thus lerned ones for euer, to knowe in whych ma-ner I shulde come to the houre of the nyghte and to myne ascendent, as verely as maye be taken by so smale an instrument. But nathe-lesse thys rule in generall wyll I warne the for euer: Ne make thou neuer none ascendēt at noone of the daye. Take a iuste ascendent of thyne Astrolabye, and haue sette iustlye a clocke, when any celestial body, by the which thou weenest gouerne thilke thynges, ben nye the southe lyne: for trust well, when the sunne is nere the meridional lyne, the degree of the sunne remeueth so longe concentryke vppon thyne almycanteras, that sothely thou shalte erre fro the iuste ascendent. The same conclu-syon say I by my centure of my sterre fyre by the nyght, & moreouer by experience I wote well that fro our orizonte fro eleuen of the clocke vnto one in takynge of the iuste ascen-dent in a portatyfe astrolabye, it is to harde to knowe, I meane from eleuen of the clocke before noone, tyll one of the clocke nexte fo-lowynge: and for the more declaration lo here thy fygure nexte after thys rule that folowyth

¶ To knowe the degree of the sunne in thy zodiake by the dayes in the backsyde of thyne Astrolabye.

Then thou wolte weten to recken and knowe whych is the daye of the moneth that thou arte in, and laye the rule of thy Astrola-bye, that is to saye the alhabor vpō the daye in the calender of thyne astrolaby, and be shal shewe the thy degre of the sunne.

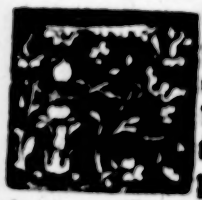
¶ Speciall declaration of the ascendent.

The ascendent sothly, is as well in all natiuites as in questions, and as in elections ofte tymes is a thynge, whych that these astrolo-giens greatly obseruen, wherfore me seemeth conuenient, sens I spoke of the ascendent, to make of it a speciall declaration. The ascen-dent sothly to take it at the largest, is thylke degree that ascendeth at any of these forsayd tymes on the eest orizont: and therfore, yf that any planet ascende at thilke same tyme in the

forsayde

sayd same gre of his lõgitude, mé say þ the planeplanet is in horoscopo, but sothly þ house of þ ascendent, that is to say, þ fyrst house or theest angle, is a thynge more brode & large, for after the statutes of astrologiens, what celestiall body that is 5 degrees aboue thylke degree that ascendeth on the orizont, or with in that nombre, that is to sayne nere the degree that ascendeth, yet reché they thylke planette in the ascendent, & what planet that is vnder thylke degree that ascendeth the space of 15 degrees, yet sayne they that planette is lyke to hym that is the houre of the ascendét. But sothly yf he passe the bounder of the for sayd spaces aboue or byneth, they sayne that thylke planette is fallynge fro the ascendent: yet saine these astrologiens that the ascendét and eke the lorde of the ascendent, may be sha pé for to be fortunate or infortunate: as thus A fortunate ascendent clepen they when that no wycked planette of Saturne or Mars, or els the tayle of the dragon is in the house of the ascendent, ne that no wycked planette haue no aspecte of enemyte vpon the ascendét but they woll call þ they haue fortunate planette in her ascendent, and yet in hys felicate, and then saye they that it is well. Furthermore they sayne that fortune of an ascendent is the contrary of these forsayd thinges. The Lorde of the ascendent sayne they, that he is fortunate when he is in good place for the ascendent, and eke the lorde of the ascendent is in an angle or in a succedét where he is in his dygnite, and conforted wyth frendely aspectes receyued, and eke he that maye se the ascendent not retrograde ne combuste, ne ioyned wyth no fixe we in the same sygne, ne that he be not in his dyscencion, ne reigned vp no planette in hys dyscencions, ne haue vpon hym none aspecte infortunate, & then they sayne that he is well. Natheless these bene observaunces of Judiciall mater and rytes of payynms, in whych my spirite hath no fayethe ne knowynge of her horoscopum, for they sayne that euerye sygne is departed in 3 euen partes, by 10 degrees and thylke porcyon they clepen a face. And although a planette haue a latytude fro þ eclyptyke, yet sayne somtyme so that the planette aryse in that same sygne, wyth any degre of the forsayd face, in whych hys longitude is reckened. And yet is þ planet in horoscopo be in naturalles or in election.

¶ To knowe the very equacion of the degrees of the sunne, yf it so be that it fall betwyxte to almicanteras.



Or as moche as the almicanteras of thyne Astrolaby ben compouned by two and two, where as some almycanteras in sondrye astrolabyes ben cõpowned by one or els by two, it is necessary to thy lernyng, to teche þ fyrst to knowe & wyych vb thyne instrumẽt: wher fore whé þ the degre of þ sun falleth betwene two almycãteras or els yf thyn almycãteras ben graué vb ouer great a poynt of a cõpace, for both these thinges maye cause errour as wel in knowynge of þ tyde of þ day as of the very ascendent. Thou muste werken in thys wyse: set the degree of the sunne vppon the hyghest almycanteras as of both, and wayte well where thy almurye toucheth the bordure, and sette there a pryche of ynke, sette adowne agayne the degree of the sonne vpon the nether almycanteras of bothe, & set there a nother pryche: remeue then thy almurye in the bordure euen amydden both pryches, and thys woll leaden iustlye the degre of þ sunne to sytte betwene both þ almycanteras in hys ryght place. Laye then the label on the degre of the sunne, and fynde in the bordure the very tyde of the daye or of the nyght. And also verely shalte thou fynde vpõ thy west ozizont thy ascendent.

¶ To knowe the spryngе of the datwynge and the ende of the euenyng, the whych ben cleped the two crepusculis.



Sette the nadyre of the sunne vpon 18 degrees of herght amenge thyne almycanteras on the weste syde, and laye thy labell on the degre of the sunne, and then shall the poynte of the labell shewe the spryngе of the daye: also sette the nadyre of the sunne vpon the 18 degrees of the herght amonge thyne almycanteras on the eest syde, and lay ouer thy labell vpon þ degree of the sunne, and wyth the poynt of thy labell fynde in the bordure

bordure the ende of thyne euenynge, that is very nyght. The nadyr of the sunne is that degree that is oppolyte to the degree of the sunne in the .xx. lygne, as thus. Euerye degree of Aries by ordre, is nadyr to euery degree of Libra by ordre, and Taurus to Scorpion, Gemini to Sagittarius, Cáncr to Capricorne, Leo to Aquary, Virgo to Pisces. And yf any degree in thy zodyake be darke, his nadyr shall declare hym.

¶ To knowe the arche of the day, that some folke callen the daye artificiall, fro the sunne arysynge tyll it go downe.

SEt the degree of the sunne vpon thyne Est orizonte, and lay thy labell on the degree of the sunne and at the poynt of thy labell in the bordure set a pryche: tourne than thy reet about tyll the degre of the sunne sytt vpon the west orizont, and lay the labell vpon the same degree of the sunne, and at ꝑ poynt of the labell set an other pryche. Reckon than the quantitie of tyme in the bordure betwixt both pryches, and take there thyne arche of thy daye: the remnaunte of the bordure vnder the orizonte, is the arche of the nyght. Thus mayst thou teken both arches of euery porcion where that thou lyuest, and by this maner of werkynge mayest thou se how longe that any starre lyte dwelleth about the erth, fro the tyme that he ryseth till he go to rest. But the daye naturell, that is to sayne .24. houres is the reuolution of the equinoctiall, with as moche partie of the zodyake, as the Sunne of his propre mouing passeth in the meane whyle.

¶ To turne the houres inequalles, and the houres equalles.

KNow the nombre of the degrees in the houres inequalles, and departe hem by .15. and take there thyne houres equalles.

¶ To knowe the quantitie of the day vulgate, that is to saye, fro sprynge of the daye vnto the very nyght.

KNow thy quantitie of thy coepuscelys, as I haue it taughte in the chapiter before, and adde hem to the arche of the daye artificial, and take there thy space of all the hole daye vulgare vnto the very nyght. In the same maner mayest thou werke to knowe the vulgare nyght.

¶ To knowe the houres inequalles by daye

VNderstande well, that these houres inequalles ben cleped houres of the planetes: and vnderstande wel that somtyme ben they longer by daye than they be by nyght, and somtyme contrary. But vnderstonde thou well, that euermore generally the houres inequall of the daye, with the houres inequall of the nyght, conteyneth .30. degrees of the bordure, the whiche bordure is euermore answerynge to the degrees of ꝑ equinoctiall, wherfore departe the arche of the daye artificyall vn .12. and take there the quantitie of the houre inequall by daye, and yf thou abate the quantitie of the houre inequall by daye out of .60. degrees, than shall the remnaunt that leaueth, perfourme the houre inequall by nyght.

¶ To knowe the quantitie of houres equalles.

THe quantities of houres equalles, that is to sayne, the houres of the clocke, ben departed by .15. degrees all readye in the bordure of thy Astrolabye, as well by nyght as by day generally for euermore. what nedeth anymore declaracyone wherfore whan thy lyst to knowe how manye houres of the clocke bene passed, or anye parte of any of these houres ben to comē fro suche a tyme to suche a tyme, by daye or by nyght, knowe the degree of thy sunne, and laye thy labell on it: than tourne thy reete aboute iopntly with thy labell, and with the poynt of it teken in the bordre fro the Sunne arysyng into the same place there thou desyrest by daye as by nyght.

This conclusion wol I declare in the fourth partye of the last chapter of this treatyse, so openly that there shall lacke no worde that nedeth declaracyon.

¶ Specyal declaracion of the houres of the planetes.

UNderstande well that euermore from the arysynge of the Sunne tyll it goo to rest, the nadyr of the Sunne shall shewe the houre of the planete, and fro that tyme forwarde all the nyght, tyll the sunne aryse, than shall the very degree of the sunne shewe the houre of the planet. Ensample as thus. The .x. daye of Marche fell vpon a saturday peraduenture, and at the rysynge of the Sunne I founde the seconde degree of Aries syttyng vpon myne est ouzont, albe it was but lytle. Than founde I the second degree of Libra nadyr of my sunne, descendyng on my west ouzont, vpon which west ouzont euery day generally at the sonne arysyng entreth the houre of any planet, vnder the forsayde west ouzonte, after the whiche planet the daye beareth hys name, and endeth in the nert stryke of the planete, vnder the forsayde weste ouzonte: and euer as the sunne clymbeth vpper and vpper, so goeth hys nadyr downer and downer, & echynge fro suche strykes the houres of planetes, by ordre as they sytten in heauen. The fyrste houre inequall of euerye saturdaye is Saturne, and the seconde to Jupyter, the thyrd to Mars, the fourth to the Sunne, the fyfth to Venus, the syxt to Mercurius, the seuenth to the moone, and than ayen the eyght to Saturne, the nynth to Jupiter, the .x. to Mars the enleuenth to the sunne, the twelfth to Venus. And now is my Sunne gone to rest as for that saturday, than sheweth the very degree of the sun the houre of Mercury, entryng vnder my west ouzonte at euen. And nexte hym succedeth the moone, and so forth by ordre planet after planet, in houre after houre all the nyght longe tyll the sun aryse. Now ryseth the Sunne the sundaye, by the motowe, and the nadyr of the sun vpó the west ouzont, sheweth me the entryng of ỳ houre of the forsayde sunne. And in this maner succedeth planet vnder planet, fro Saturne vnto the moone, and from the moone vp a gayne to Saturne, houre after houre generally: and thus knowe I this conclusyon.

¶ To knowe with whych degree of the zodiake any starre fyxe in thyne Astrolaby aryseth vpon the Est ouzont, although the ouzont be in an other sygne.

SEt the centure of the starre vpon the Est ouzonte, and loke what degree of anye sygne that sytteth vpon the same ouzont at the same tyme: and vnderstande well, that wyth the same degree aryseth the same starre. And thys marueious arysyng with a stronge degree in an other sygne, is bycause that the latitude of the starre fyxe is eyther North or South fro the equinoctiall. But sothly, the latitudes of planetes ben comenly reckened fro the ecliptyke, bycause that none of hem declineth but fewe degrees out fro the brede of the zodiake. And take good kepe of thys chapiter of arysyng of celestiall bodyes, for there trusteth wel, that neyther moone neyther starre in our amboryte ouzont, that aryseth with the same degree of hys longitude, saue in one case, and that is whan they haue no longitude fro the ecliptyke lyne. But neuertheles somtyme is euerych of these planetes vnder the same lyne.

¶ To knowe the declinacyon of euery degree in the zodiake fro the equinoctial cercle.

SEt the degre of any sygne vpon the lyne meridional, and reckon his altitude in the almycanteras fro the Est ouzont vp to ỳ same degree set in the forsayde lyne, & set there a pryche: Turne vp than thy rect, and sette the heed of Aries or Libra in the same meridionall lyne, and set there an other pryche. And whan that is done, consyder the altytudes of hem both: for sothly the difference of thylke altitude is the declynacyon of thylke degree fro the equinoctiall. And yf it so be that thylke degree be Northwarde fro the equinoctiall, than is his declinacyon North, and yf it be southward than is it South.

¶ To

¶ To knowe for what latitude in any regyon the almycanteras in my tables ben compowned.

Eken how many degrees of almicanteras in the meridionall lyne, be from the cercle equinoctiall vnto the zygnet, or els from the pole artike vnto the north orizonte, and for so greate a latitude or so smal a latitude, is the table compowned.

¶ To knowe the latitude of the sunne in the myddes of the daye, that is cleped the altitude meridian.

Set the degree of thy sunne vpon the lyne meridionall, and reken how many degrees of almicanteras ben betwyxt thyne est orizont, and the degre of thy sunne and take there thyne altitude meridian, that is to sayne, ꝑ hyghest degre of the sunne as for that day. So mayest thou knowe in the same lyne the hyghest lyne that anye starre fyxe clymbeth by night, this is to sayn, that whan any starre fyxe is passed the lyne meridional, than begynneth it to descende, and so doth the sunne.

¶ To knowe the degre of the Sunne by the eest for a maner cotowne.

Eke busily with thy rule, ꝑ highest of the sunne in the myddes of the day, turne than thyne astrolaby, and vp a pryck of yuke marke the nombre of the same altitude in the lyne meridionall. Turne than thy eest about tyll thou fynde a degre of thy zodiake according with the pryck, this is to sayne, syttyng on the pryck, and in soth thou shalt fynde but .2. degrees in all the zodiake of that condicio And yet thylke .2. degrees ben in dyuers sygnes. Than mayest thou lyghtly by the season of the yere knowe the sygne in whiche is the sunne.

¶ To knowe which daye is lyke to other in length throughout the yere.

Loke whiche degrees ben ylyke from the heedes of Cancer and Capricorne, and loke whan the sunne is in any of thilke degrees than ben the dayes like of length that is to sayne, that as longe is that day in the moneth, as was suche a daye in suche a moneth there varyeth but lytle. Also if thou take two dayes naturelles in the yere ylyke farre from either poyntes of the equinoctial in the opposyte partyes, than as long is the daye artificiall, on that one daye as on that other: and eke the contrary.

¶ This chapiter is a maner declaracion to conclusyons that foloweth.

Vnderstande well, that thy zodiake is departed into halfe cercles, from the heed of Capricorne vnto ꝑ heed of Cancer, and ayenwarde from the heed of Cancer vnto the heed of Capricorne. The heed of Capricorne is the lowest poynte, where as the sunne goth in wynter, and the heed of Cancer is ꝑ hyghest poynt, in which the sunne goth in Sommer. And therefore vnderstande wel that any two degrees that bene ylyke farre from any of these two heedes, trust well, that thylke two degrees ben lyke declynacyon, be it Southwarde or Northwarde, and the dayes of hem be lyke of length, and the nyghtes also, and thadowes ylyke, and the altitudes ylyke at myddaye for euer.

¶ To knowe the very degree of anye maner starre straunge after his latitude, though he be indeterminate in thyne astrolaby, sothly to the trouth thus he shalbe knowen.

Take the altytude of thy starre whan he is on the eest syde of the lyne meridional as nygh as thou mayest gesse, and take an ascendent anon eyght by some maner starre fyxe which thou knowest, and forget not the altitude of the fyxt starre ne thyne ascendent.

And whan that thys is doone, aspye diligentlye whan thys same fyxte starre passeth any thinge to the south, westwarde, and

ratche hym anon ryght in the same nombre of the altitude on the weste syde of this lyne meridionall, as he was caught on the Este syde, and take a newe ascendent anon ryght by some maner fyne, the whyche that thou knowest, and forget not this seconde ascendent. And whan this is done, reken thā how many degrees ben betwixt the first ascendēt and the seconde ascendent, and reken well ꝑ mydle degre betwixt both ascendentes, and set thylke mydle degree upon thyne eest orysont, and than loke what degre syt upon the lyne meridional & take there ꝑ very degre of the ecliptyke, in whyche the starre standeth for the tyme. For in the ecliptyke is the longitude of a celestial body, reckened euen fro ꝑ halfe of the heed of Aries unto the ende of Pisces, and his latitude reckened after the quantitie of his declinacion North or south towarde the poles of this werke. As thus: yf it be of the sunne or any fyxe starre, reken this latitude or his declinacyon fro the equinoctial cercle, and yf it be of a planete, reken than the quantitie of his latitude from the ecliptike lyne, albeit so that from the equinoctiall maye the declinacion or the latitude of any body celestial be rekened after the syght North or South, and after the quantitie of his declinacion. And yet so manye the latitude or the declinacion of any body celestial saue only of the sunne, after his syght north or South. And after the quantitie of his declinacion be rekened from the ecliptike lyne, fro which lyne al planetes somtyme declyne North or South, saue onelye the forsayde sunne.

¶ To knowe degrees of longitudes of fyxe sterres, after that they ben determinat in thyne astrolabye, if it so be that they ben truly set.

SEt ꝑ centre of the ster upon the lyne meridionall, and take kepe of thy sodyake, and loke what degree of any sygne syt upon the same lyne meridional at the same tyme, and there the degre in which the starre standeth, and with the same degre commeth the same starre unto the same line from the orysonte.

¶ To knowe in speyall the latitude of oure centre, I mene after the altitude of Oxenforde & the heyght of our pole.

VNderstande well, that as far is the heed of Aries or Libram the equinoctial from our orysonte, as is the synet from the poole artyke, and as hye as the pole artyke from the orysont, as the equinoctial is farre from the synet, I preue it thus by the latitude of Oxenforde, understande well that the heyght of our pole artyk from our north orysont is .xi. degres, and .x. minutes, than is the synet from the pole artyke .xi. degrees and .xo. minutes, than is the equinoctial from our synet .xi. degrees and .xo. mynutes, than is our south orysonte from oure equinoctiall .xi. degrees and .xo. mynutes. Understande well this rekening also, forget not that the synet is .xo. degrees of heyght from the orysont, and our equinoctial is .xo. degrees from our pole artyk. And this shortrule is soth, that the latitude of any planete in a regyon, is the distaunce from the synete unto the equinoctiall.

¶ To proue the latitude of any place in a regyon by the prefe of the heyght of the pole artyke in that same place.

AN some wynters nyght whan the firmament is clere & thycke starred, wayte a tyme tyll that euery sterre fyxe syt lyne ryght perpendiculer ouer the pole artyke, & clepe that ster I. and wayte an other sterre that syt lyne ryght under I. and vnder the pole, and clepe that sterre F. and vnderstande well that F is not consydred but onely to declare that I that syt euer on the pole. Take than anone ryght the altitude of I from the orysont, & forget it not: let I & F goo fare well, tyll agayns the dawnynge a great whyle, and come than agayne, and abyde tyll that I is euen under the poole under F. for sothly than wyl F syt ouer ꝑ pole, take than eftsones, the altitude of I, from the orysont, and note as wel the seconde altitude as ꝑ fyrst altitude. And whā that this is done, reken how many degrees ꝑ the first altitude I ereded his altitude, & take halfe

the

the like portiõ that is exceded and adde it to his seconde altitude, and take there the elevacion of the poole, and eke the altitude of thy regyon. For these two ben of one nõbre, that is to sayne, as manye degrees as thy pole is elevate, so moche is the latitude of thy regyon. Ensample as thus: Paraventure the altitude of ♈ in the euenyng is. 62. degrees of heyght, than wyl the seconde altitude or the dawenyng be. 21. that is to sayn lesse than. 92. that was his fyrste altitude at euen. Take than the halfe of. 62. and adde it to. 21. that was his seconde altitude, & than hast thou the heyght of thy pole, and the latitude of thy regyon. But vnderstande well to preue this conclusyon and manye an other sayre cõclusyon, thou mayest haue a plomet hangyng on a lyne hyghet than thyne heed on a perche, and that lyne mote hange euen perpendiculer betwyxt the poole and thyne eye, and than shalt thou se yt ♈ sit euen ouer the pole and ouer ♐ at euen. And also yt ♐ sye euen ouer the pole and ouer ♈ or daye.

¶ An other conclusyon to preue the heyght of the pole artyke from the orizont.

Take any sterre fyxe that euer descendeth vnder the orizont in thylke region, and cosydre his hyghest altitude, and his lowest altitude from the orizont, and make a nombre of these altitudes, take than and abate halfe ꝑ nombre, and take there the elevacyon of the pole artyke in that same regyon, and for the more declaracyon. &c.

○ ♓. ♊. ○ ♑.

¶ An other conclusion to preue the latitude of a regyon that ye ben in.

Vnderstande wel that the latitude of any place in a regyon is bereyn the space betwixt the sygne of ♑ in that dwellen there, and the equinoctiall cercle, north or south, takynge the measure in the meridionall lyne, as sheweth in the almicantras of thyne astrolabye. and thylke space is as moche as the pole artyke is hye in ꝑ same place from the orizont. And than is ꝑ depressyon of the pole artentyke beneth the orizõt the same quantite of space, neyther more ne lesse, that yf thou desyre to knowe this latitude of the regyon, take the altitude of the sunne in the mydle of the day, whan the sun is in the heed of Aries or of Libra, for than moueth the sunne in the lyne equinoctiall, & abate the nombre of the same Sunnes altitude out of. 90. degrees, and than is the remnaunt of the nombre that leueth the altitude of the regyon, as thus. I suppose that ꝑ sun is thilke day at noone. 38. degrees of heyght, abate than. 38. degrees out of. 90. so leaueth there. 52. than is. 52. degrees the latitude. I saye not this but for ensample. for well I wote the latitude of Orenton̄de is certayne mynutes lesse. Now yf it be so that the thynketh to longe a tarying to abyde tyl that the sunne be in ꝑ heed of Aries or of Libra, than wayte whan that ꝑ Sunne is in anye other degre of the zodiake and cosydre the degre of this declinacion be northwarde from the equinoctiall, abate than from the sunnes altitude at noone the nombre of hys declinacion, and than haste thou the hyghest of the heedes of Aries and Libra, as thus. ♃ sunne paraventure is in the. 10. degre of ♌ almoost. 50. of heyght at noone, and his declinacion is almoost. 18. degrees Northwarde from the equinoctiall, abate than thylke. 18. degrees of declinacion out of the altitude at noone, than leaueth. 32. degrees, so there the heed of Aries or Libra, and thyne equinoctiall in that regyon. Also yf so be that the sunnes declynacyon be Southwarde from the equinoctiall, adde than thylke declynacyon to the altitude of the sunne at none, and take there the heedes of Aries and Libra & thyne equinoctiall, abate than the heyght of the equinoctiall out of. 90. degrees, and than leaueth there. 38. degrees, that is the distaunce of the regyon from the equinoctiall of anye sterre fyxe that thou knowest, and take the nether elongacion lengthen from the same equinoctial lyne, and werke after the maner aforesayde.

¶ Declaracyon of the ascencion of sygnes, as well in cercle direct, as in oblique.

The excellẽce of ꝑ sphere solyde amõges other noble cõclusiõs shewth manyfest ꝑ diuers ascẽciõs of sygnes in diuers places,

as wel in right cercles as in embolyke cercle
These auctours wryten that thilke signe is
cleped of right ascencyon, with whiche the
more parte of the cercle equinoctial and the
lesse parte of the zodyake ascendeth, & thilke
signe ascendeth embolyke, with whiche the
lesse of the zodiake equinoctial, and the more
parte of the zodiake ascendeth, and euer mo
the arche of the day and the arch of ꝑ nyght
is there ylyke longe, and the sunne twyse e-
uery yere passynge through the signes of her
heed, and .2. somers and .2. wynters in a yere
haue these forsayde people, and the almy-
cantras in her Astrolabye ben streyght as a
lyne, so hath shewed in this fygure. The vti-
lities to knowe the ascencyons of sygnes in
the right cercle is this. Trust well that be
mediations of thylke ascencyons these A-
strologiens by her tables and her instrumē-
tes knowen verely the ascencion of euery de
gree and mynute in all the zodiake in the em-
bolyke cercle, as shall be shewed. And note
that this forsayd right orysont that is cle-
ped orizōte rectum, deuideth the equinoctial
into right angles, and embolyke orisont
where as the poole is enhaunced vpon the
orisont, ouercommeth the equinoctial in em
bolyke angles.

¶ This is the conclusyon to knowe the asce
cyons of sygnes in the right cercle, that
is circulus directus.

SEt the heed of what sygne the
lyst to knowe the ascending on
the right cercle vpon the lyne
meridionall, and wayte where
thyne almury toucheth the bor
dure, and set there a pryche, tourne than thy
rete westwarde, tyll the ende of the forsayde
sygne, set vpon the meridionall lyne, and eft
sones wayte where thine almury toucheth ꝑ
bordure, & set there an other pryche. Reckon
than the nombres of degrees in the bordure
betwyxt both pryckes, and take than the as
cencyon of the sygne in the right cercle, and
thus mayest thou werke with euery porcyō
of the zodyake.

¶ To knowe the ascencions of signes in the
embolyke cercle in euery regyon, I
meane in circulo obliquo.

SEt the heed of the sygnes whiche
as the lyst to knowe his ascencio
vpon the est orizonte, and wayte
where thyne almury toucheth ꝑ
bordure, and set there a pryche, tourne than
thy rete vpwarde tyll the ende of the same
sygne, set vpon the est orizonte, and wayte
eftsones where as thyne almury toucheth ꝑ
bordure, and set there an other pryche reken
than the nombre of the degrees in the bor-
dure betwyxt bothe pryckes, and take there
the ascencyon of the sygne in the embolyke
cercle. And vnderstande well, that all the sy-
gnes in the zodyake, from the heed of Aries
vnto the ende of Virgo, ben cleaped sygnes
of the north from the equinoctial, and these
sygnes aryse n betwyxt the very est and the
very north in our orizonte generally for euer
and all the sygnes from the heed of Libra,
vnto the ende of Pisces, ben cleped signes of
the south fro the equinoctiall, and these sy-
gnes aryse n euermore betwyxte the verye
Est and the very South in our orisont. Al-
so euery sygne betwyxte the heed of Capry-
corne vnto the ende of Gemini ariseth in our
orisont in lesse than two houres equalles, &
these same signes from the heed of Capry
corne vnto the ende of Gemini ben called cro
ked signes or croked sygnes, for they ry-
sen embolyke in our orisont, and these croked
sygnes bene obedient to the signes that ben
of the right ascencion. These sygnes of the
right ascencion ben from the heed of Cancer
vnto the heed of Sagitarye, and these signes
aryse n more vpryght than doeth the other,
and therfore they ben called soueraygne sy-
gnes, and euery of hem ariseth in more space
than in two houres, of which signes Gemi-
ni obeyeth to Cancer, and Taurus to Leo,
and Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aqua
rius to Scorpio, and Capricorne to Sagit
tarye, and thus euermore two sygnes that
ben farre from the heed of Capricorne obey-
eth euerychē of hem to other.

¶ To knowe iustly the foure quarters of the
worlde, as est, west, south and north.

TAke the altitude of thy sunne, whan
thou lyst, and note well the quarter
of the worlde, in which the sunne is
from

from the tyme by the asimutes, tourne than thyne astrolaby and set the degree of the sun in þ almycantras of hys altytude, on thylke syde that the sunne standethe, as is in maner of takynge of houres, and ley thy labell on the degree of the sunne, and reken howe many degrees of the sunne ben betwene the lyne meridional and the poynte of thy labell and note well the nombres. Tourne than agayne thyne astrolabye, and set the poynt of thy greate rule there thou takest thyne altytudes vpō as many degrees in hys boxdure from hys meridionall, as was the poynte of thy labell from the lyne merydyonall on the wombe syde. Take than thyne astrolabye wyth bothe handes sadly and stylye, and let the sunne shyne throughe bothe holes of thy rule, and stylye in thylke shynynge ley thyne astrolabye couche adoun euen vpon a plaine grounde, and than wyll the meridional lyne of thyne astrolabye be euen southe, and the Est lyne wyll ye euen Est, & the weste lyne west, & the North lyne Northe, so that thou werke softely and auysely in the couchynge, and thou hast thus foure quarters of the firmament. &c.

¶ To knowe the altitude of planetes from the waye of the sunne whether they bene North or south fro the waye aforsayd.

Loke wha a planete is on þ lyne meridionall, yf that her altitude be of the same height that is the degree of the sunne for that day and than is the planet in the verey waye of the sunne, and hath no latitude. And yf the altitude of the planet be hyer thā the degree of the sunne, than is the planette North from the waye of the sygne Southe, a quantyte of latitude as sheweth by thyne Almicantras, and yf the altitude be lesse thā the degree of the sunne, than is the planette Southe from the waye of the sunne, suche a quantyte of latitude as sheweth by thyne almucantras. This is to sayne from the waye of the sunne in euery place of the zodiake, for on the morowe the sunne wyll be in another degree.

¶ For to knowe the sygnet for the aryssyng of the sunne, thys is to sayne the partye of the orizonte in which the sūne ariseth.

Thou must fyrst consyder that the sūne aryseth not in the verey Est sygnet, sometyme by North Est and sometyme by South Est, sothly the sunne aryseth euermore in the verey Est in our orizonte, but yf he be in the heed of Aryes or Libra. Nowe is thyne orizonte departed in to .24. partes of thy mynutes in sygnyfycacyon of .24 partes of the worlde, thoughe it be so that thy mynen reken all that partes .32. Thā is there no more but wayte in the whych mynute that the sunne entreth at hys aryssynge, and take there the signet of the ryssinge of the sunne.

¶ The maner of deuision of thyne astrolaby is thus enioyned, as in this case.

Fyrst it is deuyded in four places principally with the lyne that cometh fro the Est to the weste, and than with another lyne that goth fro the South to the Northe, than is it deuided in smale parties of mynutes, as Est and Est by Southe, where that is the fyrste mynute aboue þ est line, and so forth fro partye to partye tyl that thou come agayne to the Est lyne. Thus thou myght vnderstaude the signet of euery sterre in whych partye he aryseth.

¶ To knowe in which partie of the firmament is the conjunction.

Consyder the tyme of the conjunction by the kalender, as thus: how many houres that the cōjunction is fro myddday of the day before, as sheweth the canon of the kalender. Reken than that nombre in the boxdure of thyn astrolaby, as thou were wonte to do in knowinge of the houres of the day or of þ nyght and lay thy label ouer the degre of the sunne than wyll the poynte of the labell sytte vpon the houre of the conjunction. Loke than in whyche mynute the degree of the sunne syt-

eth, and in that partye of the fyrmament is the conjunction.

¶ To knowe the fygnet of the altitude of the sunne.

This is no more to saye, but any time of the daye take ꝑ altitude of ꝑ sũne, and by the mynutes in whych he ascendeth thou myghte se in whyche partie of the firmamente he is, and in the same wyse mighte thou se by night of any sterre whether he lyst East, west, or South, or any part bytwixe, after ꝑ name of the minutes in which the sterre standeth.

¶ To knowe lothly the longitude of the mone or any planette that hath no latitude fro the tyme of the eclipsyke lyne.

Take the altitude of the mone, and reken thyne altitude vp amonge thyne Almycantras on whyche syde that the mone standeth, and sette there a pucke. Take than anone eyght vpon the mones syde the altitude of euerye sterre fyre that thou knowest, and set his circle vpon his altitude amonge thyne almycantras, there the sterre is founden, wayte than of whyche degree the zodiake is, to whyche the pricke of the altitude of the moone, and there take the degree in whyche the moone standeth. Thys conclusion is verey sothe of the sterres in thyne astrolabye, and standen after the trouthe. Some treatyse of the astrolabye maketh none exception whether ꝑ mone haue latitude or none, nor whether syde of the mone ꝑ altitude of the sterre be founde. And note yf the moone shewe her selfe by day, than maist thou worcth ꝑ same conclusion by the sũne as wel as by the sterre fyre.

¶ Thys is the werchynge of the conclusyon to knowe whether anye planet be directe or retrograde.

Take the altitude of any sterre that is cleped a planette and note it well, and anone eyght take ꝑ altitude of some sterre fyre that thou knowest & note it well also, and come agayne the thyrde or the fourth nyght nexte folowyng, for thã thou shalt perceyue well the meuynge of the planette whether he meue forwarde or backwarde, and wayte well than whan the sterre fyre is in the same altitude that she was whan thou toke her firste altitude of the forsayd planette and note it wel, for truste well yf so be that the planette be in the right syde of the meridionall lyne, so that his seconde altitude be lesse than the fyrst altitude was, than is the planette directe, and if he be in the west syde in that condition, thã is he retrograde, and yf so be that thys planette be in the East syde whan hys altitude is take, so that the seconde altytude be more than his fyrst altitude, thã is he retrograde and yf he be in the west syde of the lyne meridionall, than is he directe but contrary mouynge of these partyes is the course of the mone, for sothly the moone moueth the contrarye fro eyther planettes in her eclypsyke lyne, but in none other maner.

¶ The conclusyon of equacyons of houses after the astrolabye.

Sette the begynnynge of the degree ꝑ ascendeth vpon the ende of the 8 houre inequall, thã wyl the lyne of the seconde house sit vpon the line of mydnyght, remeue than the degre that ascendeth, and set hym vpon the ende of the 10 houre inequall, thã wyl the begynnyng of the 3 house syt vpõ the midnight line, bunge vp agayn the same degre that ascendeth fyrst, and set hym vpon the East ouzent, and thã wyl the begynnyng of the 4 house syt vpon the mydnyght lyne. Take than the nadere of the degree ꝑ ascendeth fyrst and set hym vpon the ende of the 2 houre inequall, and than wyl the begynnyng of the 5 house syt vpon the mydnyght lyne. Take than the nadere of the ascendente and set hym vpon the ende of the 4 houre inequal and than wyll the begynnyng of the 6 house syt vpon the mydnyghte lyne. The begynnyng

nynge of the 7 house is nadere of the ascendent and the begynnyng of the 8 house is nadere of the seconde, and the begynning of the 9 house is nadere of the 3 and the begynnyng of the 10 house is nadere of the 4 and the begynnynge of the 11 house is nadere of the 5 & the begynnynge of the 12 house is nadere of the 6 house.

¶ Another maner of equacyons of houses by the astrolabye.

TAke thyne ascendent, and than thou hast the 4 angles, for wel thou wotest that the appositte is of thyne ascendente, that is to saye, the begynning of the 7 house sytt vpon the west orizonte, and the begynnyng of the 10 house vpon the lyne meridionall, & hys opposite vpon the lyne of mydnight, than lay thy label vpon the degre that ascendeth & reken than fro the poynte of thy labell all the degrees in the bordure tyl that thou come to the meridionall lyne, and departe al thylke degrees into 3 euen parties, & take there the euen porcyons of 3 other houses for to laye thy labell ouer euerye of these 3 parties, and thā thou might se by the label in the zodiake the begynninge of these 3 houses fro the ascendente, that is to saye the 12 nerte aboue thyne ascendent, and than the 11 house and the 10 house vpon the meridional lyne, as I tyrste sayd the same wyse worth fro the ascendent downe to the lyne of mydnyght, and thus thou hast thre houses, that is to saye, the begynnyng of the seconde, the thyrde, and the fourth house: than is the nadyre of these thre houses, the begynnynge of these 3 houses that folowerth.

¶ To fynde the lyne meridionall, to dwell fyxe in any certayne place.

TAke a rounde plate of metall for warpinge the border the better, & make therupon a tuste compace a lytle wythin the bordure, and lay this rounde plate vpon an euen grounde, or some euen stone, or on euen stocke fire in the grounde, and lay it euen by a rule in the centre of the compace, stycke an euen pynne or a wyre vpryghte, the smaller the better, and sette thy pinne or thy wyre by a plōme rules ende vpryght euen, and let thys pynne be no lenger than a quarter, of thy diameter of the compace fro the pynne, and wayte besyly aboute 10 or 11 of the clocke whan the sunne sheweth, whan the shadowe of the pynne entreth any thynge wyth the cercle of the compace one heer brede, and make there a pucke wyth pike, abyde than styll wayting on the sunne after one of the clocke, tyl that the shadowe of the pynne or of the wyre passe anye thynge out of the cercle or compace, be it neuer so litle, and sette there a pucke. Take thā a compace and measure euen the middle betwyxte both the pyckes, & set there a pycke: take than a rule and drawe a stryke euen fro the pynne vnto the myddle pucke, and take there the line meridional for euermore, as in the same place. And yf thou drawe a crosse ouerthwart the compace iustly ouer the line meridionall, than haste thou Est and west, & per cōsequens the oppositite, that is south and North.

¶ Discription of the meridionall lyne, and of the longitudes & latitudes of cityes and townes as wel as of clymates.



Thys lyne meridional is but a maner discription of a lyne ymagined, that passeth vpon þ poles of the worlde, & by the syghte of oure heed: & it is cleped the sygnette, for in what place that any mā is at any tyme of the yere whan the sūne by meuyng of the firmament cometh to hys meridionall place, than is it the verey myddaye that we clepe noone, and therfore it is cleaped the lyne of myddaye. Than take hede that euermore of two cities or of townes, of whyche the one approcheth nerer the Est than dothe the other towne, truste well that thylke two townes haue diuers meridians. Take kepe also þ the arche of the equinoctial, that is conteyned & bounded betwene the two meridians, is cleped þ lōgitude of the towne. And if so be that two townes haue meridian lyke, or one meridian, than is the distaunce of hem bothe lyke farre: & in thys maner they chaunge not her

meridian

meridian, but sothly they chaunge her almicantaras for the haunsynge of the poole and the distaunce of the sunne. The longitude of a clymate may be cleaped the space of the erth, fro the begynnynge of the fyrst clymate vnto the last ende of the same clymate, euen directe ayenst the pole artike, thus say some auctours. And some clerkes say, that yf men cleape the latitude of a centre the arch meridian, that is contemed or intercepte betwirt the sygnette and the equinoctiall, than they say that the distaunce fro the equinoctial vnto the ende of the clymate, euen ayenste the poole artyke, is the longitude of the clymate for South.

¶ To knowe wyth what degre of the zodiake that any planette ascendeth on the ouzont, where hys latitude be North or South.

KNowe by thine almynake the degree of the ecliptike of any sigue, in whiche that the planette is reckened for to be and that is cleped the degree of his longitude. And knowe also the degree of hys latitude fro the ecliptyke, North or southe, and by these ensamples folowyng in especiall thou mayst witch wyth euerye sigue of the zodiake. The longitude peraunture of Venus or of an other planet was of Capricorne, and the latitude of hym was northwarde.

Degrees fro the ecliptyke lyne, than toke I a subtyl compace, & cleped the one poynte of my compace ♄, and that other ♀, thā toke I the poynte of ♄, and set it in the ecliptyke lyne, and my zodiake in the degre of the longitude of heedes, that is to saye, in the heede of Capricorne, and than set I the poynte of ♀, vpwarde in the same sygne, bycause that the altitude was Northe, vpon the latitude of Venus, ꝑ is to saye, in the degree fro the heed of Capricorne, and thus haue I the degrees betwyre my two puckes, than layde I downe softly my compace, and set the degree of ꝑ longitude vpō the ouzont, thā toke I and wared my labell in maner of a payre of tables, to receyue distinctly ꝑ pucke of my compace, than toke I thys forsayd labell, and layd it fire ouer the degree of my longitude, thā toke I vp my compace & the poynte of ♄, in ꝑ ware of my label, as I coude gesse ouer the ecliptyke lyne in the ende of the longitude, I sette the poynte ouer endelonge on the labell, vpon the space of the latytude inwarde and on the zodiake, ꝑ is to say northward fro the ecliptyke: Thā layde I downe my compace, and loked well in the way vpō the ecliptyke of ♄, and ♀, than turned I my reete tyl that the pucke of ♀, sate vpon the orizont: Than sawe I well that the bodye of Venus in her latytude of degrees septētrionals, ascendeth in the ende of degree fro the heed of Capricorne. And note that in thys maner thou myghtest werche wyth any latitude septemtrionall in al signes: But sothly the latitude meridional of a planet in Capricorne may not be take, bycause of the lytle space betwyre the ecliptyke and the bordure of the astrolabye, & syker ye in all other sygnes it maye be take. Also the degree peraunture of Jupiter or of anye other planet was in the fyrste degree of Pisces in longitude, and his latitude was degrees meridionall. Than toke I the poynte of ♄, and set it in the fyrst degre of Pisces on the ecliptyke, than sette I the poynt downwarde of ♀, in the same sigue, because that the latitude was South degrees, that is to saye, fro the heed of Pisces, & thus haue I degrees betwyre bothe puckes. Than sette I the degree of the longitude vpon the ouzont, than toke I my labell and layde hym fire vpō the degree of longitude, than sette I the poynte of ♄, on my labell euē ouer the ecliptyke lyne in the ende of the degree of the longitude, & I sette the poynte of ♀, endelonge on my label the space of degrees of the latitude outwarde fro the zodiake, that is to say, southwarde fro the ecliptyke toward the bordure and than tourned I my reete tyll the poynte of ♀, sate vpon the ouzont, than sawe I well that the bodye of Jupiter in hys latytude of degrees meridionall, ascendeth with the degre of Pisces in horescopo. And in this maner thou mayst wyrch wyth any latitude as I sayd fyrste, saue in capricorne. And thou wylte plye thys crafte wyth the arysinge of the mone, loke thou recken well the course of houre by houre, for she dwelleth in a degree of her longitude but a lytle whyle, as thou wooste well: but neuertheleſſe, yf thou legen wel her very meuyng by the tables, or after her

ber course houre by houre, thou shalt do well ynough.

¶ Umbra recta.

If thou wylt wyrche with Umbra recta, yf thou myghte come to the base of the towre, in thys maner shalt thou wyrch: Take the altitude of the towre wyth both hooles, so that the rule lye euē on a point. Ensample, as thus. I se him through the point of 4, than mete I ꝑ space betwyxe me and the toure, and I fynde it 20 foote, than beholde I howe 4 is to 12, and I fynde it is the thyrde parte of 12. Ryghte so the space betwixe the and the toure is the thyrde parte of the altitude of the toure: thā thryse 20 foote is the highest of the toure, wt the addicion of thyne owne bodye fro thyne eye. If the rule fall on 5, than is 5 tymes 12 the hyghest of the toure.

¶ Umbra versa.

If thou maist not come to the base of the toure, & thou fire hym thorowe the nombre of 1, sette there a prycke at thy fote, thā go nere the toure, and se hym through at the poynte of 2, and set there another prycke, and than beholde howe 1 hath hym to 12, and thou shalt fynde that he hathe hym 12 sythes, than beholde how 2 haue hym to 12, and thou shalt fynd it 6 sythes, & therfore the space betwixe 2 pryckes is 6 tymes thyne altitude. And note that at the fyrste altitude of 1 thou settest a prycke, and afterwarde whan thou sest hym through at 2, there ꝑ settest a prycke thā thou fyndest betwene 30 fote, than thou shalte fynde that 10 is the 3 parte of 30, than is a foote the altytude of the toure, but yf it fall vpon another pounte, as thus. It falleth on 6 at the seconde taking it, whan it falleth on 4, than shalte thou fynde that 6 is the seconde parte of 12, and 4 is the thyrde part of 12 by the thyrde parte, ꝑ is to saye, the space betwyxe 2 pryckes, twyse the heygte of the toure, and if the difference were 3, thā woolde it be thre times the height. Et sic de singulis Another maner wyrchyng by vmbra recta. If thou mayste not come by the base of the toure, wyrche in thys wyse: Set thy rule vpon 1 tyll thou se the altitude, and set at thy fote a prycke, and than set thy rule vpō 2, & so do in the same maner: than loke what is the difference betwyxe 1 and 2, and thou shalte fynde that it is one. Than mesure that space betwyxe the two pryckes, and that is the 12 parte of the altitude of the toure, and so of al other. 7

¶ Umbra recta.

If thy rule fall vpon the 8 pointe on the ryght shadow, thā make the fygure of 8 than loke howe muche space of fete is betwyxe the and the toure, and multiply that by 12, and whan thou hast multyplyed it by the same nombre, than deuyde it by the nombre of 8, and kepe the residewe, and adde therto thy heyght vnto thyne eye, to the residue, and that shall be the very heyght of the toure. And thus mayste thou worche on the same syde from one to 12. ℣. Umbra recta.

Another maner of working vpō the same side. Loke vpon what poynt thy rule falleth whā thou seest the toppe of the tour thorow the two holes, and thā mete the space from thy foote to the base of the toure, and ryghte as the nombre of the poynte hathe hym selfe to 12, ryghte so the mesure betwyxe the and the toure, hath him selfe to the heyght of the same tour. Ensample as thus. I sette case thy rule fal vpon 8, than is 8 two thyrde partes of 12, so is the space two thyrde partes of the toure.

¶ Umbra versa.

To knowe the heyghte of the pountes of Umbra versa. If thy rule fall vpon 3 whā thou seest the toppe of the tour, set a prycke there thy fote stōdeth and go nere tyll thou mayste se the same toppe at the poynt of 4, and sette there another prycke, than mete howe many foote is betwyxe the two pryckes, and the heyght vp to thyne eye, and that shall be the heyght of the tour. And note that thre is the 4 parte of 12, and 4 is the 3 part of 12. Now passeth 4 the nombre of 3 by distaunce of 1, ther fore

Lore the same space with thy heyght to thine eye, is the height of the toure. And yf it were so that there were two or thre distaunces in the nombres, so shulde the mesure betwixte the pyckes be twyse or thryse the heyght of the toure.

¶ Umbra recta.

KNowe the heyght yf thou mayst not come to the base of the thynge, sette thy rule upon what poynte thou wylte, so that thou mayste se the toppe of the thing through the two holes, and make a marke there as thy foote stondeth, & go nere or farther, tyl thou mayst se it through another point, & make ther ano ther marke, & loke what differēce is betwixt the two poyntes in the scale, and evyght as that difference hath hym to 12, evyght so the spaces betwyxt the two markes, hath hym to the heyght of the thynge. Ensample. I set the case ỳ thou seest it thorowe at the poynte of 4, and after at the poynt of 3. Now passeth the nombre of 4 the nombre of 3 the distaunce of 1, and evyght as thys difference of one hath him selfe to 12, evyght so the mesure betwixt bothe the markes, hathe hym to the heyght of the same thynge, puttynge therto the height of thy selfe to thyne eye. And thus mayst thou werke from 1 to 12.

¶ Umbra versa.

FUrthermore, yf thou wylte knowe in umbra versa, by the crafte of umbra recta, I suppose to take thine altitude at the poynte of 4 and makeste a marke, and than thou gost nere tyll thou haste it at the poynte of 3 and makest there another marke than muste thou deuide 144 by 4, the nombre that cometh therof shall be 36, and after deuyde 144 by 3, & the nōbre ỳ cometh therof is 48, than loke what difference is betwixt 36 and 48, and that shalt thou fynde 12, and evyght as 12 hath hym to 12, so the space betwixt the two pyckes, hath hym to the altitude of the thynge.

¶ Here endeth the conclusions of the Astrolabie.

The complaynt of the blacke knyght.

IN May whan Flora the freshe lusty Quene
The soyle hath cladde, in grene, reed, & whyte
And Phebus gan to shed his stremes shene
Amydde the bulle, wyth all the beames bryghte
And Lucifer, to chace awaye the nyght
Ayen the morowe oure orizont hath take
To byd al lovers out of her slepe awake

And herkes heuy for to comforte
From dirkyhed, of heuy nyghtes sorowe
Nature bade hem ryse, and hem disporte
Ayen the goodly glad grey morowe
And hope also, with savyr Johan to borowe
Bade in dispite of daunger and dispayre
For to take the holsome lusty ayre

And wyth a syghe I gan for to abreyde
Out of my slomber, and sodaynly vp sterte
As he, alas that nyghe for sorowe deyde
Wyth sychemesse sore ave sore nye my herte
But for to fynde socour of my smerte
Or at the leste some releasse of my peyne
That me so sore halte in every veyne

I rose anone, and thought I wolde gone
Into the wodde, to here the bryddes synge
Whan that the myrky vapeure was agone
And clere and fayre was the morowning
The dewe alsotyde sylure in shynyng
Upon the leaues, as any baume swete
Tyl fyry Tytan wyth his persaunt hete

Had dryed vp the lusty lycour newe
Upon the herbes in the grene mede
And that the flowres of manye dyuers hewe
Upon her stalkes gonne for to spredde
And for to splaye out her leaues in bredde
Agayne the sunne, golde burned in his spere
That down to hem cast he his beames clere

And

And by a ryuer forth I gan coste
Of water clere, as bytell or crystall
Tyll at the laste I founde a lytell wey
Towarde a parke, enclosed wyth a wall
In compace rounde, and by a gate small
Who so that wolde, freely myght gone
In to thys parke, walled wyth grene stone

And in I went to here the bydes songe
Whych on the braunches both in plaine & vale
So lowde sange, that all the woode ronge
Lyke as it shulde shyuer in peces smale
And as me thought, that the nyghtyngale
With so great might, her voyce gan out wrest
Right as her herte for loue wolde brest

The soyle was plaine, smothe, & wodder softe
All ouerspradd wyth tappettes that Nature
Had made her selfe: couered ekc alofte
Wyth bowes grene, the floures for to cure
That in her beautye they may longe endure
From all assaute of Phebus feruent fere
Whych in hys sphere so hote shone and clere

The eyre attempre, and the smoth wynde
Of zepherus, amonge the blosomes whyte
So holsome was, and so norysshing by kynde
That smale buddes, & rounde blosomes lyte
In maner gan of her breethe delyte
To yeue vs hope there frute shall take
Ayenst Autumpne redy for to shake

I sawe the Daphene closed vnder rynde
Grene Laurer, and the holsome Pyne
The Pyrre also, that weepeth euer of kynde
The Cedres hye, vpryght as a lyne
The Fyliberte eke, that lowe doth enclyne
Her bowes grene, to the erthe aboun
Vnto her knyght called Demophoun

There sawe I eke the freshe hawthorne
In whyte motley, that so swote doth smel
Ashe, fyrre, & oke, wyth many a yonge acorne
And many a tree mo then I can tell
And me before I sawe a lytell well
That had hys course, as I gan beholde
Under an hyll, wyth quycke streames colde

The grauell golde, the water pure as glasse
The bankes rounde, the well enuyronynge
And softe as veluet the yonge grasse
That therupon lustely came sprynging
The sute of trees about compasyng
Her shadowe caste, closyng the well
And al the herbes growyng on the g

The water was so holsome, and so verty
Thorowe might of herbes growyng by
Not lyke the welle where as Marcell
Pslayne was, thorowe vengeance of C
Where so couertly he dyd hyde
The grayne of bethe vpon eche brinke
That deth moste folowe, who so euer d

Ne lyke the pytte of the Pegace
Vnder Pernaso where poetes slepte
Nor lyke the welle of pure chastyte
Whiche that Diane with her nymphes kept
Whan she naked in to the water lepte
That slowe Acteon with her hondes fel
Onely for he came so nyghe the wel

But this welle that I here reherce
So holsome was, that it wolde alway
Bollen hertes, and the venym pierce
Of pensyfehed, with al the cruel rage
And ouermore refesshe the vysage
Of hem that were in any werynesse
Of great labour, or fallen in distresse

And I that had thorowe daunger & dis
So due a thrust, thought I wolde ass
To taste a draught of this welle or th
Why bytter langour if it might alaye
And on the banke anon downe I laye
And with myn heed, vnto the welle I cra
And of the water dranke I a good draw

wherof me thought I was refresshed
Of the brennyng that sate so nye my he
That verily anon I gan to fele
In huge parte released of my smerte
And therwithal anon vp I sterte
And thought I wolde walke and s. m
Forthe in the parke, and in the holtes h

And throngh a launde as I yed a pace
And gan aboute faste to beholde
I founde anon a delectable place
That was beset with trees yonge and
Whose names here for me shal not be to
Amydde of whiche stoode an herber gre

That decked was, with colours new & clene

Thys herber was full of flowres gende
Into the whych, as I beholde gan
Betwyxt an hulsere and a woddbende
As I was ware, I sawe where lay a man
In blacke, and whyte coloure pale and wan
And wonder deedly also of hys hewe
Of hurtes grene, and freshe woundes newe

And ouermore dystrayned wyth sycknesse
Beside all thys he was full grenously
For vpon hym he had an hote accesse
That daye by daye hym shoke full pytously
So that for constraynynge of hys malady
And hetly wo, thus lyenge all alone
It was a dethe for to here hym grone

wherof astonyed, my fote I gan wythdrawe
Greatly wondrynge what it myght be
That he so laye, and had no felawe
Ne that I coude no wyght wyth hym se
wher of I had routh, and eke pyte
And gan anone, so softely as I coude
Amonge the bushes prively me to shroude

Yf that I myght in any wyse aspye
what was the cause of hys deedly wo
Or why that he so pytously gan crye
On hys fortune, and on the also
wyth all my myght I layde an eere to
Euery worde to marke what he sayd
Out of hys swough amonge as he abrayde

But fyrst, yf I shulde make mencion
Of hys person, and playnly hym discryue
He was in sothe, wythout exception
To speake of manhode, one the best on lyue
There may no man ayen trouth stryue
For of hys tyme, and of hys age also
He proued was, there men shulde haue ado

For one the best therto of brede and length
So well ymade by good proporcion
Yf he had be in hys delyuer strength
But thought and sycknesse were occasyon
That he thus laye in lamentacion
Grufle on the grounde, in place desolate
Sole by hym selfe, awhaped and amate

And for me semeth that it is syttyng
Hys wordes al to put in remembraunce
To me that herde all hys complaynyng
And all the grounde of hys wofull chaunce
Yf there wythall I may you do pleasaunce
I woll to you so as I can anone
Lyke as he sayd, reherce euerychone

But who shall helpe me nowe to complayne
Or who shall nowe my style gye or lede
O Niobe, let nowe thy teeres rayne
Into my penne, and helpe eke in nede
Thou wofull Arrie, þ felest myn hert blede
Of pytous wo, and myne hande eke quake
when that I wryte, for thys mannes sake

For vnto wo accordeth complaynynge
And dolefull chere vnto heuynesse
To sorowe also, syghynge and wepyng
And pytous mournynge vnto drerynesse
And who that shall wryte of dystresse
In party nedeth to knowe feelyngly
Cause and roote of all such malady

But I alas, that am of wytte but dull
And haue no knowynge of suche matere
For to discryue, and wryte at the full
The wofull cõplaynte, whych þ ye shal here
But euen lyke as doth a skryuenere
That can nomore, what that he shall wryte
But as hys mayster besyde dothe endyte

Ryght so fare I, that of no sentement
Saye ryght nought in conclusyon
But as I herde when I was present
Thys man complayne, wyth a pytous soun
For euen lyke wythout addicioun
Or diminysshe, eyther more or lesse
For to reherce anone I woll me dresse

And yf that any nowe be in thys place
That fele in loue brennynge or fervence
Or hyndred were to hys ladyes grace
wyth false tonges, that wyth pestilence
Slee trewe men, that neuer dyd offence
In worde nor dede, ne in her entent
Yf any suche be here nowe present

Let hym of routh laye to audience
wyth dolefull chere, and sobre countenaunce
To here thys man, by full hye sentence
Hys mortall wo, and hys perturbaunce
Complaynynge, nowe lyenge in a traunce
wyth lokes vpcaste, and rufull chere

The

Theffecte of whych was as ye shall here.

The thought oppressed wt inward syghes sore
The paynful lyfe, the body languyshynge
The wofull goste, the herte rent and tore
The pytous chere pale in complaynynge
The deedly face, lyke ashes in shynynge
The salte teares that from myne eyen fall
Parcell declare, grounde of my paynes all

whose herte is grounde to blede in heynesse
The thought resceyte of wo, & of complaynt
The brest is chest of dole and dreryneſſe
The body eke so feble and so faynte
wyth hote and colde myne ares is so maynte
That nowe I chyuer, for defaute of heate
And hote as glede, nowe sodaynly I sweate

Now hote as fyre, nowe colde as ashes deed
Now hote for cold, now cold for hete agayne
Nowe colde as yse, nowe as coles reed
For hete I brenne, & thus betwyxe twayne
I posse an, and al forcast in payne
So that my hete playnly as I fele
Of greuous colde is cause euery dele

Thys is the cold of inward hye dysdayne
Colde of dyspyte, and colde of cruell hate
Thys is the cold ꝑ euer doth hys bely payne
Ayenst trouth to fyght and debate
Thys is the colde that the fyre abate
Of trewe meanynge, alas the harde whyle
Thys is the colde that woll me begyle

For euer the better that in trouth I mente
wyth all my myght faythfully to serue
wyth herte and all to be diligente
The lesse thanke, alas I can deserue
Thus for my trouth daunger doth me sterue
For one that shulde my deth of mercy let
Hath made despyte newe hys swerde to whet

Agaynst me, and hys arowes to fyle
To take vengeaunce of wylfull cruelte
And tonges false through her sleighely wyle
Han gonne awarre, that wyll not stynted be
And false enuy, wrath and enuyte
Haue conspyred agaynst all ryght and lawe
Of her malyce that trouth shalbe slawe

And male bouche, gan fyrst the tale tell
To sclaundre trouth of indignacion
And false reporte so loude range the bell
That myslyuynge and false suspection
Haue trouth brought to his dampnacion
So that alas, wrongfully he dyeth
And falsnesse nowe hys place occupyeth

And entred is in to trouthes londe
And hath therof the full possessyon
O ryghteful god that fyrst the trouth fonde
Howe may thou suffre such oppressyon
That falshode shulde haue iurisdiction
In trouthes ryght to slee hym gyltelesse
In hys traunchyse he maye not lyue in pees

Falsly accused, and of hys foe forged
wythout answere, whyle he was absent
He dampned was, and may not be excused
For cruelte sate in iugement
Of hastynesse wythout auysement
And badde Dysdayne do execute anone
Hys iugement in presence of hys foe

Attourney maye none admytted bene
To excuse trouth, ne a worde to speke
To fayth or othe the iuge lyst not sene
There is no gayne, but he wyll be wreke
O lorde of trouth to the I call and clepe
Howe may thou se thus in thy presence
wythout mercy murdred innocence

Nowe god that arte of trouth souerayne
And seest howe I lye for trouth bounde
So sore knytte in loues fyrye chayne
Cue at ꝑ deth through gyrte wt many a wound
That lykely are neuer for to sounde
And for my trouth am dampned to the dethe
And not abyde, but drawe alonge the brethe

Consyder and se in thyne eternall ryght
Howe ꝑ myne herte professed whylom was
For to be trewe wyth all my ful myght
Onely to one, the whych nowe alas
Of volunte wythout any trespas
Myne accusours hath taken vnto grace
And cherysheth hem, my deth for to purchace

what meaneth thys, what is this wonder bre
Of purueyaunce yt I shall it call
Of god of loue, that false hem so assure
And trew alas, downe of the whele ben fall
And yet in soth, thys is the worst of all
that falsshed wrongfully of troth hath ꝑ name

And troth alwaye of falshed bereth ꝑ blame

Thys blynde chaūce, thys stormy auēture
In loue hath moste hys experience
For who ꝑ doth wyth trouth moste his cure
Shall for hys mede fynde moste offence
That serueth loue wyth all hys diligence
For who can fayne vnder lowlyhede
He fayleth not to fynde grace and spede

For I loued one, full longe syth agone
wyth all myne herte, body and full myght
And to be deed my herte can not gone
From hys heste but holde that he hath hyght
Though I be banysshed out of her syght
And by her mouth dampned that I shal dey
Unto my behest, yet I wyll euer obey

For euer syth that the worlde began
who so fyll loke, and in story rede
He shall aye fynde that the trewe man
was put abacke where as the falshede
ꝑturbered was, for loue taketh none hede
To slee the trew, and hath of hem no charge
where as the false goeth freely at her large

I take recorde of Palamydes
The trewe man, the noble worthy knyght
That euer loued, and of hys payne no reles
Notwythstandyng his māhode & hys myght
Loue vnto hym dyd full great vnryght
For aye the bet he dyd in chyualrye
The more he was hyndred by enuye

And aye the better he dyd in euery place
Through hys knyghthode and busy payne
The ferther was he from hys ladyes grace
For to her mercy myght he neuer attayne
And to hys deth he coude it not restrayne
For no daungere, but aye obey and serue
As he beste coude, playnly tyll he sterue

what was the fyne also of Hercules
For all hys conquest and hys worthynesse
That was of strength alone peerles
For lyke as bokes of hym lyst expresse
He sette pyllers through hys hye prowesse
Iwaye at Gaddes for to sygnifye
That no mā myght hym passe in chyualrye

The whych pyllers ferre beyonde Inde
He set of golde, for a remembraunce
And for all that was he set behynde
wyth hem that loue lyst feble auaunce
For hym set last vpon a daunce
Agaynst whome helpe may no stryke
For all hys trouth he loste hys lyfe

Phebus also for all hys pertaunt syght
when that he wente here in erthe lowe
Unto the herte wyth Venus syght
ꝑwounded was through Cupides bowe
And yet hys lady lyst hym not to knowe
Though for her loue hys herte dyd blede
She let hym go, and toke of hym no hede

what shall I saye of yonge Piramus
Of trewe Tristram, for al hys hye renowne
Of Achylles, or of Antonius
Of Arcite, or of hym Palamowne
what was the ende of her passyoune
But after sorowe deth, and then her graue
Lo here the guerdon that these louers haue

But false Jason wyth hys doublenesse
That was vntrewe at Calkos to Medee
And Theseus, rote of vnkyndnesse
And wyth these two ete the false Enee
Lo thus the false aye in one degre
Had in loue her lust and all her wyll
And fayre falshode, there was none other skyll

Of Thebes ete the false Arcite
And Demephoon ete for his slouthe
They had her lust & al that myght delyte
For al her falshode and great vntrouthe
Thus euer loue alas, and that is routhe
His false lieges forthereth what he may
And sleeth the trewe vngoodly day by day

For trewe Adon was slayne with the bore
Amydde the forest in the grene shade
For Venus loue he feute al the sore
But Vulcanus wyth her no mercy made
The foule chorle had many nyghtes glade
where Mars her knyght and her man
To fynde mercy comforte none he can

Also the yonge strenthe Dyomedes
So lusty fre as of hys courage
That for to serue with al his herte he ches
Athalanta so fayre of her vysage
But loue alas quitte hym so his wage
wyth cruell daungere playnly at the last

That

That wyth the deth guerdonleſſe he paſt

Lo here the fyne of loues ſeruyſe
Lo how that loue can hys ſeruauntes quyte
Lo howe he can hys faythfull men dyſpyſe
To ſlee the trewe men and falſe to reſpyte
Lo howe he deth the ſwerde of ſorowe byte
In hertes ſuch as moſt hys luſt obey
To ſaue the falſe and do the trewe dey

For fayth nor othe, worde, ne aſſuraunce
Trewe meanynge, awayte, or buſyneſſe
Stedfaſt porte, ne faythfull attendaunce
Manhode ne myght in armes worthyneſſe
Purſute of worſhyp nor hye proweſſe
In ſtraunge lande rydynge ne trauayle
Ful lyttell or nought in loue doth auayle

Perryll of deth, nor in ſee ne lande
Hunger ne thurſte, ſorowe ne ſyckeneſſe
Ne great empryſes for to take on hande
Shedynge of bloode, ne manfull hardyneſſe
Ne otte woundynge at lauces by diſtreſſe
Nor in partynge of lyfe, nor deth alſo
Al is for nought, loue taketh no hede therto

But leſynges wyth her flatterye
Through her falſhed, & with her doubleneſſe
wyth tales newe, and many fayned lye
By falſe ſemblaunt and counterfete bubleſſe
Under colour depaynte wyth ſtedfaſtneſſe
wyth fraude couered vnder a pytous face
Accepte be nowe rathell vnto grace

And can hym ſelfe nowe beſt magnifye
wyth fayned porte and preſumpcion
They haunte her cauſe wyth falſe ſurquidye
Under meanynge of double entencion
To thynke one in her opinion
And ſaye another, to ſet hym ſelfe alofte
And hynder trouth, as it is ſene full ofte

The which thynge, I bye nowe al to dere
Thanked be Venus, and the God Cupide
As it is ſene by myne oppreſſed chere
And by hys arowes that ſtycken in my ſyde
That ſaue deth, I nothynge abyde
Fro daye to daye, alas the harde whyle
when euer his darte that hym lyſt to ſyte

My wofull herte for to rrue a two
For faute of mercy, and lacke of pyte
Of her that cauſeth all my payne and wo
And lyſt not ones of grace for to ſe
Unto my trouth through her cruelte
And moſte of al I me complayne
That ſhe hath ioye to laugh at my payne

And wylfully hath my deth ſworne
All gyltleſſe, and wote no cauſe why
Saue for the trouth that I had aforne
To her alone to ſerue faythfully
O god of loue, vnto the I cry
And to thy blende double deyte
Of thys great wronge I complayne me

And vnto thy ſtormy wylfull variaunce
Yment wyth chaunge and great vnſtableneſſe
Now vp now down, ſo rennyng is thy chaunce
That the to truſt may be no ſekerneſſe
I wyte it nothynge but thy doubleneſſe
And who that is an archer and is blynde
Parketh nothynge but ſhoteth by wynde

And for that he hath no diſcrecion
wythout aduyſe he let hys arowe go
For lacke of ſyght, and alſo of reaſon
In hys ſhotynge it happeth ofte ſo
To hurte hys frende rather then hys fo
So doth thys god wyth hys ſharpe ſtone
The trewe ſleeth, and letteth the falſe gone

And of hys woundyng, thys ꝑ worſt of al
when he hurteth doth to ſo cruell wreche
And maketh the ſyke for to crye and call
Unto hys foe for to be hys leche
And harde it is for a man to ſeche
Upon the poynte of dethe in ieopardye
Unto hys foe to fynde remedye

Thus fareth it nowe euen by me
That to my foe ꝑ gaue myne herte a wofide
Wote aſke grace, mercy, and pyte
And namely there where none may be foude
For nowe my ſore my leche wyll confounde
And god of kynde ſo hath ſet myne vre
My lyues foe to haue my wounde in cure

Alas the whyle now that I was borne
Or that I euer ſawe the bryght ſonne
For nowe I ſe that full longe aforne
Or I was borne, my deſteny was ſponne
Be Parcas ſyſterne to ſlee me yf they conne
For they my dethe ſhopen or my ſherte

Onely for trouth I may it not asserte

The myghty goddesse also of nature
That vnder god hath the gouernaunce
Of worldly thynges cõmytted to her cure
Dyspoſed haue throgh her wyſe purueiaũce
To gyue my lady ſo moche ſuffyſaunce
Of all vertues, and therwythall puruyde
To murdre trouth, hath take daũger to gyde

For bounte, beaute, shappe, and semelyhed
Prudence, wyt, pallyngly fayrnelle
Benygne porte, glad chere wyth lowlyhed
Of womanhede ryght plenteous largenelle
Nature dyd in her fully impreſſe
when ſhe her wrought, & alther laſt diſdayne
To hinder trouth ſhe made her chãberlayne

when myſtruſt alſo, and falſe ſuſpection
wyth myſbyleue ſhe made for to be
Chefe of counſayle to thys concluſyon
For to exyle trouth and eke pyte
Out of her court to make mercy flee
So þ dyſpyte nowe holdeth forth her reyne
Through halty byleue of tales þ men feyne

And thus I am for my trouth alas
Murdred & ſlayne, wt wordes ſharpe & kene
Cyuilelle god wote of all treſpas
And lye and blede vpon this colde grene
Nowe mercy ſwete, mercy my lyues quene
And to your grace of mercy yet I preye
In your ſeruyce that your man maye deye

But yf ſo be that I ſhall dye algate
And that I ſhall none other mercy haue
Yet of my deth let thys ben the date
that by your wyl I was brouȝt to my graue
Or haſtely, yf that you lyſt me ſaue
My ſharpe woundes that ake ſo and blede
Of mercy charme, and alſo of womanhede

For other charme playnly is there none
But onely mercy, to helpe in thys caſe
For though my woundes blede euer in one
My lyfe, my deth, ſtandeth in your grace
And though my gylte be nothynge, alas
I aſke mercy in all my beſt entente
Redy to dye, yf that ye aſſente.

For there agaynſt ſhall I neuer ſtryue
In worde ne werke, playnly I ne may
For leuer I haue then to be alyue
To dye ſothly, and it be to her paye
Yea though it be thys ſame daye
Or when that euer her lyſt to deuyſe
Hartyly me to dye in your ſeruyſe

And god þ knoweſt þ thoght of euery wyght
Ryght as it is, in euery thynge thou mayſt ſe
Yet er I dye, wyth all my full myght
Lowly I praye to graunt vnto me
That ye goodly fayre freſhe and fre
whych onely ſlee me for defaute of rothe
Or that I dye, ye maye knowe my trouth

For that in ſoth ſuffyſeth me
And ſhe it knowe in euery circumſtaunce
And after I am wel payde that ſhe
If that her lyſt of deth to do be graunce
Vnto me that am vnder her ſuȝraunce
It ſytte me not her dome to diſobeye
But at her luſte wylfully to deye

wythout grutchynge or rebelyon
In wyll or worde, holy I aſſent
Or any maner contradiction
Fully to be at her commaundement
And yf I dye, in my teſtament
My herte I ſende, and my ſpirite alſo
what ſo euer ſhe lyſte wyth hem to do

And alder laſte to her womanhede
And to her mercy me I recommaunde
That lye nowe here betwyxte hope & drede
Awaytynge playnly what ſhe lyſt comaunde
For verely thys nys no demaunde
welcome to me whyle me laſteth breethe
Ryght at her choyſe where it be lyfe or dethe

In this maner more what myght I fayne
Seyth in her hande, and in her wyll is all
Bothe lyfe & deth, my loye and al my payne
And fynally my heſte holde I ſhall
Tyl my ſpirite by deſteny fatall
when that her lyſt fro my body wende
Haue here my trouth, & thus I make an ende

And with that worde he gan ſygh as ſore
Lyke as hys herte cruel wolde at wayne
And helde hys peace, & ſpake no worde more
But for to ſe hys wo and mortall payne
The teres gonne fro myne eyen rayne
Full pytously for very inwarde rothe

That

That I him saw, so long wishing for trouth

And all thys whyle my selfe I kepte close
Amonge the bowes, and my self gonne hyde
Tyll at the last the wofull man arose
And to a lodge weute there beside
where all the day, hys custome was tabyde
Sole to complayne of hys paynes kene
From yere to yere vnder the bowes grene

And for because that it drewe to the nyght
And that the sonne his arke diurnall
ypassed was, so that his persaunt light
Hys bright bemes and hys stremes all
were in the waues of the water fall
Under the bordure of our occyan
Hys chare of golde, hys course so swyftly ran

And whyle the twylyght of the rowes rede
Of Phebus lyght were dearar alyte
I penne I toke, and gan me fast spede
The wofull playnte of thys man to wryte
worde by worde as he dyd endyte
Lyke as I herde and coude hem to reporte
I haue here set, your hertes to disporte

If ought be myssaye the wyte on me
For I am worthy for to beare the blame
If any thynge myssereported be
To make thus dytte for to seme lame (same
Through myne vnconing, but for to sayn the
Lyke as this man his complaynt dyd expresse
I aske mercy and forgyuenesse

And as I wrote, me thought I sawe a ferre
Ferre in the west lustely appere
Esperus the goodly bryght sterre
So glad, so fayre, so persaunt eke of chere
I meane Uenus wyth her bemes clere
That heuy hertes onely to releue
Is wonte of custome for to shewe at eue

And I as fast fell adowne on my kne
And euen thus to her gan I to prey
O lady Uenus so fayre vpon to se
Let not this man for hys trouthe deye
For that ioy thou haddest whan thou leye
wyth Mars thy knight, whan Uulcanus fonde
And with a chayne vnpyssyble you bonde

Togyder bothe twayne in the same whyle
That all the courte aboue celestyall
At your shame gan laughe and smyle
Ah, fayre lady wyfly fonde at all
Comforte to carefull, o goddes immortall
Be helpynge nowe, and do thy dilygence
To let the stremes of thyne influence

Descende down, in forthersng of the trouth
Namely of hem that lye in sorowe bounde
shewe now thy myst on her wo haue routh
Or false daunger sle hem and confounde
And specially let thy myght be founde
For to socoure what so that thou maye
The trewe man that in the herber lay

And all trewe forther for hys sake
O glad sterre, O lady Uenus myne
And cause hys lady hym to grace take
Her herte of stele to mercy so enclyne
Or that thy bemes go vp to declyne
And er that thou nowe go fro vs adowne
For that loue thou haddest to Adowne

And whan she was gone to her rest
I rose anone, and home to bed wente
For wery me thought it for the best
Dyssayenge thus in all my best entente
That all trewe, that be wyth daunger shente
wyth mercy may in releasse of her payne
Secured be, er daye come eftesagayne

And for that I ne may no lenger wake
Farewell ye louers all that be trewe
Dyssayenge to god and thus my leue I take
That er the sonne to more we be risen newe
And er he haue ayen rosen hewe
That eche of you may haue suche a grace
Hys owne lady in armes to embrace

I meane thus, in all honeste
wythout more ye may togyder speke
What so ye lyst at good lyberte
That eche may to other her herte breke
Un talousyes onely to be wreke
That hath so longe of his malyce and enuye
Werred trouthe with hys tyranny.

¶ Lenuoye.

Dyncesse pleaseth it to your benygnyte
Thys lytell dyte to haue in mynde
Of womanhode also for to se
Your man may your mercy fynde
And pyte eke, that long hath be behynde
Let hym agayne be prouoked to grace

For by my trouthe it is agaynst kynde
False daunger to occupye hys place

Go lytell quayre vnto my lyues quene
And my very hertes souerayne
And be ryght glad, for she shall the sene
Suche is thy grace, but I alas in payne
Am lefte behynde, & not to whom to playne
For mercy, ruthe, grace, and eke pyte
Exiled be, that I may not attayne
Retrete to kynde of myne aduertyte.

¶ Explicit.

¶ A prayse of women.

All tho that lyste of women euyll to speke
And dayn of hem worse than they deserue
I pray to god that her neckes to breke
Or on soure euyll dethe mote tho langlers sterue
For euery man were holden hem to serue
And do hem worshyp, honour, and seruyce
In euery maner that they best coude deuyse

For we ought fyrst to thynke on what manere
they brig vs forth, & what payn they endure
Fyrst in our byrth, and syth fro yere to yere
Howe busely they done theyr busy cure
To kepe vs fro euery myschaunce
In our youth whan we haue no myght
Our selfe to kepe, neyther by daye nor nyght

Alas, howe may we say on hem but wele
Of whom we were fostred and vpbroze
And ben al our succoure, & euer trew as stele
And for our sake full ofte they suffre soze
Without women were all our ioye loze
wherfore we ought all women to obey
In all goodnesse, I can no more say

This is well knowen, and hath ben of thys
That women ben cause of al lyghtnesse
Of knyghthode, nurture, & al the wyng al maner
Encrease of worthyp, and of al worthynesse
Therto curteys and mekenesse, and grounde of
all goodnesse
Glad and merry, and trewe in euery wyse
That any gentyl herte can thynke or deuyse

And though any wold trust to your vntruth
And to your fayre wordes wold aught assent
In good fayth me thynketh it were great ruth
That other women shold for her grete be shent
That neuer knewe ne wyst nought of her entent
Me lyste not to here your fayre wordes pe wote
whyche pe you payne fro day to day tendyte

But who may be ware of your tales vntrewe
That ye so busyly paynt and endyte
For ye wyll swere that ye neuer knewe
Ne sawe the woman, neyther moche ne lyte
Saue onely her to whom ye had delyte
As for to serue of all that euer ye sey
And for her loue muste ye nedes dey

Thā wyl ye swere that ye knew neuer before
what loue was ne his dredfull obseruaunce
But nowe ye seie that he can wounde sore
wherfore ye put you in to her gouernaunce
whō loue hath ordeyned you to serue & do plesaunce
vp all your myst your hertes space
whyche endeth sone, but yf she do you grace

And than to bedde wyll ye soone drawe
And sone sicke pe wyll you than fayne
And swere fast your lady hath you slawe
And drouyt you sodenly in so depe a payn
That fro your dethe may no man you restrayn
wyth a daungerous loke of her eyen two
That to your dethe muste ye nedes go

Thus wyl ye mone, thus wyll ye syghe sore
As though your herte anon in two wold brest
And swere fast that ye may lyue no more
Myne owne lady that myght yf ye lest
Bringe myne herte sondele in to rest
As yf you lyst mercy on me to haue
Thus your vntrouth wyll euer mercy craue

Thus wol ye playne, tho ye nothyng smerte
These innocent creatures for to begyle
And swere to hem, so wounded is your herte
For her loue, that ye may lyue no whyle
Scarsly so longe as one might go a myle
So hyrth dethe, to bryng you to an ende

But yf

But yf your souerayn lady lyst you to amede

And yf for routh she cõforte you in any wyse
For pyte of your false othes sere
So ỳ innocent weneth ỳ it be as you deuyse
And weneth your herte be as she may here
This for to cõfort, & somwhat do you chere
Than woll these tangiers deme of her ful yl
And sayne that ye haue her fully at your wyl

Lo howe redy her tonges ben, and prest
To speke harme of women causelesse
Alas, why might ye not as wel say the best
As for to deme hem thus gyltelesse
In your herte ywis there is no gentylnesse
that of your own gylte, lyst thus womẽ fame
Now by my trouth, me thynk ye be to blame

For of women cometh this worldly wele
wherfore we ought to worshyp hẽ euermore
And though it mishap one, we ought for to hele
For it is all through our false lore
That day and night, we payne vs euermore
wyth many an othe, these women to begyle
wyth false tales, and many a wycked wyle

And yf falshede shulde be reckened and tolde
In women, ywys full trouthe were
Not as in men by a thousande folde
fro all vyces ywys they stande clere
In any thyng that euer I coude of here
But yf entysyng of these men it make
That hem to flatteren connen neuer slake

I wold fayne were wher euer ye coude here
without mens tysing, what womẽ dyd amys
For ther ye may get hẽ, ye lye fro yere to yere
And many a gabbynge ye make to hem ywys
For I coude neuer here, ne knowen er thys
where euer ye coude fynde in any place
That euer women besought you of grace

There ye you payne, with al your ful might
wyth all your herte, and all your besynesse
To pleasen hem, bothe by day and nyght
Prayeng hem of her grace and gentylnesse
To haue pyte vpon your great dystresse
And ỳ they wolde on your payne haue routh
And slee you not, sens ye meane but trouth

Thus may ye se that they ben fautelesse
And innocent to all your werkes fyre
And all your crafte that touche falsnesse
They know hem not, ne may hem not espye
So sweare ye, that ye must nedes dye
But yf they wolde of her womanheed
Upon you rewe, er that ye be deed

And than your lady, and your hertes quene
Ye call hem, and therwyth ye sygh sore
And say, my lady I trowe that it be sene
In what plyte that I haue lyued full yore
But nowe I hope that ye woll no more
In these paynes suffre me for to dwell
For of all goodnesse, ywys ye be the well

Lo whiche a paynted processe can ye make
These harmlesse creatures for to begyle
And whan they slepe, ye payne you to wake
And to bethink you on many a wycked wyle
But ye shal se the day ỳ ye shal curse ỳ whyle
That ye so besily dyd your entent
Hem to begyle, that falshede neuer ment

For this ye knowe wel, though I wolde lye
In women is all trouthe and stedfastnesse
For in good fayth, I neuer of hem sye
But moche worshyp, bounte, and gentylnesse
Right commyng, fayre, and ful of mekenesse
Good and glad, and lowly you ensure
Is thys goodly angelyke creature

And yf it happe a man be in disease
She dothe her busynesse, and her full payne
wyth all her might, him to comforte & please
If fro hys disease she might hym restrayne
In worde ne dede ywys she wol not fayne
But with al her might, she doth her besynesse
To bringe hym out of hys heuynesse

Lo what gentylesse these women haue
If we coude knowe it for our rudenesse
Howe besy they be vs to kepe and saue
Bothe in heale, and also in sycknesse
And alway ryght sory for our dystresse
In euery maner, thus shewe they routhe
That in hem is all goodnesse and trouthe

And syth we fynd in hem gẽtilnesse & trouth
worthyp, bounte, and kyndenesse euermore
Let neuer this gẽtilesse, through your slouth
In her kynde trouthe be aught forlore
That in woman is, and hath ben ful yore
For in reuerence of the heuens quene

we ought

we ought to worshyp all women that bene

For of all creatures ꝑ euer were get ⁊ borne
This wote ye well, a woman was the best
By her was recouered ꝑ byrde ꝑ we had lorn
And through ꝑ woman shal we come to rest
And ben ysaued, ꝑ that our selfe lest
wherfore me thynketh, ꝑ that we had grace
we oughten honour women in euery place

Therfore I rede, that to our lyues ende
I rede thys tyme forth, whyle ꝑ we haue space
That we haue trespaced, pursue to amende
Prayenge our lady, well of all grace
To bringe vs vnto that blysfull place
There as the ⁊ all good wome̅ shal be in fere
In heuen aboue, amonge the angels clere.

Explicit.

The house of Fame.

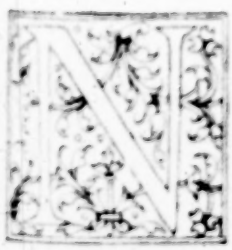


God tourne vs euerye dreme to good
For it is wonder thyng by the rood
To my wytte, what causeth swenenes
Or the morowe or on euenes
And why the effecte followeth of some
And of some it shall neuer come
why that it is an auysion
And why thys a reuelacyon
why thys a dreme, why that a sweuen
And nat to euery man lyche euen
why this a fantome, why that oracles
I not: but who so of these myracles
The causes knowe bette than I
Deryne he, for I certaynly
Ne can hem nat, ne neuer thynke
To busy my wytte for to swynke
To knowe of her significations
The gendres, ne dyuysions
Of the tymes of hem, ne the causes
Or why this is more than that is
Or yeue folkes complexions
Make hem dreme of reflexions
Or els thus, as other sayne
For the great feblenesse of her brayne
By abstynence, or by sykenesse
Pyson, stryfe, or great distresse
Or els by dyscordynaunce
Or naturall accustomaunce
That some men be to curyous
In studye, or melancolyous
Or thus: so inly full of drede
That no man may hym bote rede
Or els that deuocion
Of some, and contemplacyon
Causen suche dremes ofte
Or that the cruell yre vnlofte
Of hem that loues leden
Ofte hopen moche or dreden
That purely her ymaginacyons
Causen hem to haue vysyons
Or yf spyrites han the myght
To make folke to dreame on nyght
Or yf the soule of proper kynde
Be so perfyte as men fynde
That it wote what is to come
And that he warneth all and some
Of euerythe of her auenture
By auysyons, or by figures
But that our flesshe hath no myght
To vnderstande it a ryght
For it is warned to derkely
But why the cause is, not wote I
well worthe of thys thynge clerkes
That treaten of that, and of other werkes
For I of none opynyon
Nyll as nowe make mencyon
But only that the holye Rood
Tourne vs euery dreame to good
For neuer sythe I was borne
Ne no man els me before̅e
Wytte I trowe stedfastly
So wonderfull a dreame as I.

The tenthe day nowe of Decembre
The whyche, as I can remembre
I woll you tellen euery dele
But at my begynnyng trusteth wele
I woll make inuocation
with a deuoute spedyall deuocyon
Unto the god of slepe anone
That dwelleth in a caue of stone
Upon a streme that cometh fro Lete

That is a

That is a fludde of hell vnswete
Beſyde a fulke, that men clepe Cymery
There ſlepeth aye this god vnmery
wyth hys ſlepy thouſande ſonnis
That alway to ſlepe her won is
And to thys god that I of rede
Praye I, that he woll me ſpede
By ſweuen for to tell a ryght
If euery dreme ſtande in hys myght
And he that mouer is of all
That is and was, and euer ſhall
So gyue hem ioye that it here
Or all that they dreme to yere
And for to ſtande al in grace
Of her loues, or in what place
That hem were leueſt for to ſtonde
And ſheſde hem frome pouerte and ſhonde
And frome euery vnhappe and diſeaſe
And ſende hem that may hem pleaſe
That taketh well and frometh nought
Ne of miſdreme in her thought
Through malycious entencion
And who ſo through preſumpcion
Or hate or ſcorne, or through enuy
Deſpyte or iape, or felony
Myſdeme it, praye I Jeſus good
Dreme he barefote or dreme he ſhood
That euery nature that any man
Hath had ſythe the worlde began
Befall hym therof or he ſterue
And graunt that he may it deſerue
Lo wyth ryght ſuche a concluſyon
As had of hys auſyon
Ceſus, that was kyng of Lyde
That hygh vpon a gyber byde
Thus prayer ſhall he haue of me
I am no bette in charyte.



Owe herken, as I haue
you ſayde
What that I mette or I
abrayde
Of December the tenthe
day
Whan it was nyght, to
ſlepe I lay
Right as I was wonte to doone
And tyll a ſlepe wonder ſoone
As he that was wery forgo
On pylgrymage myles two
To the corps of ſaynt Leonarde
To maken lythe, that erſt was harde
But as I ſlepte me mette I was
wythin a temple ymade of glas
In whyche there were mo ymages
Of golde, ſtandyng in ſondrie ſtages
In mo ryche tabernacles
And wyth perre mo pynnacles
And mo curyous portratures
And queynt manet of fygures
Of golde worke, than I ſawe euer
But certaynly I nyſt neuer
where that it was, but well wyſt I
It was of Venus redely
This temple, for in purtreture
I ſawe anone ryght her fygure
Naked ſtetyng in a ſee
And alſo on her heed parde
Her roſe garlande whyte and rede
And her combe to kembe her hede
Her doues, and dan Cupido
Her blynde ſonne, and Vulcano
That in hys face was full browne
But as I romed vp and downe
I founde that on the wall there was
Thus writen on a table of bras
I woll nowe ſynge yf that I can
The armes, and alſo the man
That fyrſt came through hys deſtyne
Fugityf fro Troye the countre
Into Italye, wyth full moche pyne
Unto the ſtrondes of Lauyne
And tho began the ſtorie anone
As I ſhall tellen you echone
Fyrſt ſawe I the diſtruction
Of Troye, through the greke Symon
wyth hys falſe lyenge forſwerynges
And wyth hys chere and hys leſynges
Made a horſe brought in to Troy
By whyche Troyans loſte all her ioy
And after thys was grauen alas
Howe Ilyons caſtell aſſayled was
And wonne, and kyng Priamus ſlayne
And Polytes hys ſonne certayne
Diſpytouſly of dan Pyrrus
And nert that ſawe I howe Venus
whan that ſhe ſawe the caſtell brende
Downe frome heuen ſhe gan diſcende
And bade her ſonne Eneas to flye
And howe he fledde, and howe that he
Eſcaped was frome all the preeſs
And toke hys father olde Anchyſes
And bare hym on hys backe away

Cryeng

Cryeng alas and welaway
The whyche Archyses in hys hande
Bare tho the goddes of the lande
Thylke that bubzemned were
Than sawe I next all in fere
Howe Troilus, dan Eneas wyfe
whom that he loued all hys lyfe
And her yonge sonne Julo
And eke Ascanyus also
Fledden eke, wyth dyery chere
That it was pyte for to here
And in a forest as they went
At a tourneyng of a went
Howe Troilus was yloste, alas
That rede nat I, howe that it was
Howe he her sought, and howe her goste
Bade hym flye the grekes hoste
And sayd he muste in to Italye
As was hys destyne, fauns layle
That it was pyte for to here
whan her spyrite gan appere
The wordes that she to hym sayde
And for to kepe her sonne hym prayde
There sawe I grauen eke howe he
Hys father eke, and hys meyne
wyth hys shyppes gan to sayle
Towarde the countre of Italye
As streyght as they myghten go
There sawe I eke the cruell Juno
That arte dan Jupyters wyfe
That haste yhated all thy lyfe
All the Troyan bloode
Ren and crye as thou were woode
On Eolus, the god of wyndes
To blowen out of all kyndes
So loude, that he shulde drenche
Lorde, lady, grome, and wenche
Of all the Troyans nacyon
wythout any of her fauuacion
There sawe I suche tempest aryse
That euery herte myght agryse
To se it paynted on the wall
There sawe I eke grauen wyth all
Venus, howe pe my lady dere
weppynge wyth full wofull chere
Prayenge Jupyter on hye
To saue and kepe that naupe
Of that Trogian Eneas
Sythe that he her sonne was
There sawe I Joues Venus kysse
And graunted was of the tempest lysse
There sawe I howe the tempest stente
And howe wyth all pyne he wente
And pryuely toke a ryuage
In to the countre of Cartage
And on the morowe howe that he
And a knyght that hyght Achate
Metten wyth Venus that day
Goyng in a queynte aray
As she had be an huntereste
wyth wynde blowyng vpon her tresse
And howe Eneas began to playne
whan he knewe her of hys payne
And howe hys shyppes brent were
Or els ylost, he nyst where
Howe she gan hym conforte tho
And bade hym to Cartage go
And there he shulde hys folke fynde
That in the see were lefte behynde
And shortly of thys thyng to pace
She made Eneas so in grace
Of Dydo, quene of that countre
That shortly for to tellen the
Became hys loue, and let hym do
All that weddyng longeth to
what shulde I speke it more queynte
Or payne me my wordes to peynte
To speke of loue, it wyll nat be
I can nat of that faculte
And eke to tellen of the manere
Howe they fyrst acquaynted were
It were a longe processe to tell
And ouer longe for you to dwell
There sawe I graue howe Eneas
Tolde to Dydo euery caas
That hym was tyde vpon the see
And eke grauen was howe that she
Made of hym shortly at a worde
Her lyfe, her loue, her lust, her lorde
And dyd to hym all reuerence
And layde on hym all the dispence
That any woman myght do
wenyng it had all be so
As he her swore, and therby demed
That he was good, for he suche semed
Alas what harme doth apparence
whan it is false in exystence
For he to her a traytour was
wherfore she slowe her selfe alas
Lo, howe a woman doth amys
To loue hym that vnknowen is
For by Crist, lo thus it fareth
It is nat all golde that glareth
For also brouke I wel myne heed

Then

There may be vnder goodlyheed
Couered many a shrewde vyce
Therfore be no wyght so nyce
To take a loue onely for chere
Or speche or for frendly manere
For this shall euery woman fynde
That some man of his pure kynde
wol shewen outwarde the fayrest
Tyl he haue caught that what him lest
And than wol he cause fynde
And where he we she is vnkynde
Or false or prouy, or double was
Al this saye Eneas
And Dydo, and her nyce lest
That loued al to soone a gest
Wherfore I wol saye o prouerbe
That he that fully knoweth the herbe
Kan safely laye it to his eye
Wythouten drede this is no lye
But let vs speke of Eneas
Howe he betrayed her, alas
And lette her full vnkyndely
So whan she sawe al vtterly
That he wolde her of Trouth fayle
And wenden from her into Itayle
She gan to wringe her handes two
Alas quod she that me is wo
Alas is euery man thus trewe
That euery yere wol haue a newe
Nat so longe tyme endure
Or els this par auenture
And thus of one he wol haue fame
In magnifying of his owne name
Another for frendshyp sayth he
And yet there shal the thryde be
That is taken for delyte
Lo or els for synguler profyte
In such wordes gan complayne
Dydo of her great payne
As me mette dremyng redyly
Nowe other authour allege wol I
Alas quod she my swete herte
Haue pyte on my sorowes smerte
And flee me not go not away
O wofull Dydo, welaway
Quod she vnto her selfe tho
O Eneas what wol ye do
O that your loue ne your bonde
That ye swore with your ryght honde
Ne my cruel deth quod she
Wyll holde you styl here wyth me
O haue ye of my deth no pite
Iwys myne owne dere herte ye
Knowe full wel that neuer yet
As farre as euer I had wyt
Agylte you in thought ne in dede
O, haue ye men such goodlyhede
In speche, and neuer a dele of trouth
Alas that euer had routh
Any woman on a false man
Nowe I se wel, and tel can
we wretched women can no arte
For certayne, for the more parte
Thus we bene serued euerychone
Nowe sore that ye men can grone
Anone as we haue you receyued
Certaynly we bene disceyued
For though your loue lest a season
Wayte vpon the conclusyon
And the howe ye determyne
And for the more parte defyne
O welawaye that I was borne
For through you my name is lorne
And myne actes redde and songe
Euer al, thys laude in euery tonge
O wycked fame, for there nys
Nothynge so swyfte lo as she is
O soth is, euery thynge is wyst
Though it be couerde with the myst
Eke though I myght dwelle euer
That I haue done recouer I neuer
That it ne shall be sayd, alas
I shamed was through Eneas
And that I shal thus vnged be
Lo ryght as she hath done, nowe she
Wol done eftesones hardely
Thus saye the people prouely
But that is done nys not to done
But all her complaynt ne her mone
Certayne auayled her not a stre
And whan she wyst sothly, he
Was forth into his shyp agone
She into chambre went anone
And called on her suster Anne
And gan her to complayne thanne
And sayde that she, cause was
That she fyrst loued him, alas
And fyrst counsayled her therto
But what, whan this was sayd and do
She rafte her selfe to the herte
And dyed through the woundes smerte
But al the maner howe she deyde
And al the wordes howe she seyde
Who so to knowe it hath purpose

Rede Virgyle in Eneydos
Or the pystles of Ouyde
what that he wrote, or that he dyde
And nere it to longe to endyte
By god I wolde it here wryte
But welawaye, the harme and routh
That hath betydde for such untrouth
As men maye ofte in bokes rede
And aldaye sene it yet in dede
That for to thynken it tene is
Lo Demophon, duke of Athenys
Howe he forswore him falsely
And trayed Phyllis wyckedly
That kynges doughter was of Thrace
And falsely gan his terme pace
And whan she wyst that he was false
She honge her selfe right by the halse
For he had done her suche untrouth
Lo was not thys a wo and routh
Eke loke howe false and recheles
was to Breseyda Jason
And Paris to Oenone
And Jason to Hipsyphile
And eke Jason to Medea
And Hercules to Dyanira
For he lefte her for Jolee
That made him take his deth parde
Howe false was eke Theseus
That as the storye telleth vs
Dyde he betrayed Adriane
The dyuel be his soules bane
For had he laughed or vlouted
He must haue bene al devouted
If Adriane ne had be
And for she had of him pyte
She made hym fro the deth escape
And he made her a full false tape
For after thys wythin a whyle
He lefte her slepynge in an yle
Deserte alone right in the see
And stale awaye and let her be
And toke her suster Phedra tho
wyth him, and gan to shyp go
And yet he had swore to her
On al that euer he couthe swere
That so she saued him his lyfe
He wolde taken her to his wyfe
For she desyred nothynge elles
In certayne, as the boke vs telles
But for to excuse thys Eneas
Fullyche of al his greate trespas
The boke sayth sauns fayle
The goddes bade him go to Italye
And leauen Affriques regioun
And fayre Dydo and her towne
Tho sawe I graue howe to Italye
Dan Eneas gan for to sayle
And howe the tempest al began
And howe he lost his stereſman
whiche that the sterne, or he to kepe
Smote ouer the borde as he slepe
And also saugh I howe Sybyle
And Eneas besyde an yle
To hel wente for to se
His father Anchises the fre
And howe he there founde Palymurus
And also Dido, and Deiphebus
And euerych tourment eke in hel
Sawe he, whych longe is for to tel
whych paynes who so lyste knowe
He must rede many a rowe
In Virgyle or in Claudian
Or Dauit, that it ful can
Tho sawe I eke al the aray
That Eneas had made in Italye
And wyth kynge Latyn his treté
And all the batayls that he
was at hym selfe and his knyghtes
Or he had al ywon hys ryghtes
And howe he Turnus refte hys lyfe
And wan Lauyna to hys wyfe
And al the meruerious synals
Of the goddes celestials
Howe maugre Juno, Eneas
For al her sleyght and her compas
Atcheued all hys auenture
For Jupiter toke on him cure
At the prayer of Venus
whiche I praye alwaye saue vs
And vs aye, of our sorowes lyght
whan I had sene al thys syght
In thys noble temple thus
Hey lorde thought I, that madest vs
Yet sawe I neuer suche noblesse
Of ymages, nor suche rychesse
As I se grauen in this church
But naught wote I who did hem worche
Ne where I am, ne in what countre
But nowe wyll I out gone and se
Right at the wyket yf I can
Sene ought where sterryng any man
That maye me tellen where I am
whan I out of the doze cam
I sayd about me beheide

Than

Than sawe I but a large felde
As farre as euer I myght se
wythout towne, house, or tre
Or busshe, or grasse, or eared lande
For all the felde was but a sande
As small as men may se at eye
In the deserte of Lyby
Ne no maner creature
That is yformed by nature
Ne sawe I me to rede or wysse
O Crist thought I, that art in blysse
from fantom and illusyoun
Me saue, and with deuocioun
Myne eyen to the heauen I cast
Tho was I ware lo at the last
That fast by the sunne on hye
As kenne myght I with myne eye
Me thought I sawe an Egle sore
But that it semed muche more
Than I had any Egle yseene
This is as soth as deth certeyne
It was of golde and shone so bryght
That neuer sawe men suche a syght
But yf the heuen had ywonne
Al newe of god another sunne
So shone the Egles fethers bryght
And eek what be wnward gan it lyght
Now kyth thy engyn and thy myght
Thys Egle of which I haue you tolde
That with fethers shone al of golde
Whiche that so hye gan to sore
I gan beholde more and more
To sene her beaute and the wonder
But neuer was that dynte of thonder
Ne that thynge that men call foudre
That smyte somtyme a towre to poudre
And in hys swyfte comming brende
That so swyfte gan downwarde discende
As thys foule whan it beheld
That I a rowme was in the felde
And wyth his grym pawes stronge
wythin his sharpe nayles longe
Me fleyng at a swappe he hente
And wyth his fours agayne vp wente
Me carryeng in his clawes starke
As lyghtly as I had bene a larke
Nowe hye I can not tellen yowe
For I came vp, I nyst neuer howe
For so astonyed and aswerued
was euery vertue in me breued
what wyth his fours and my dreed
That all my felynge gan to deed
For why, it was a great affray
Thus I longe in his clawes lay
Tyl at last he to me spake
In mannes voyce, and sayd awake
And be not agast so for shame
And callen me tho by my name
And for I shulde better abrayde
Me to awake, thus he sayde
Right in the same voice and steuyn
That vseth one that I can neuyn
And with that voice soth to sayne
My mynde came to me agayne
For it was goodly sayd to me
So nas it neuer wont to be
And here withall I gan to stere
As he me in his fete bere
Tyl that he felt that I had heate
And felte eke tho myne herte beate
And tho gan he me to dispore
And wyth gentyll wordes me comfore
And sayd thyse, saynt Mary
Thou arte a noyous thynge to cary
And nothynge nedeth it perde
For also wyse god helpe me
As thou no harme shalte haue of this
And thys cas that betydde the is
Is for thy lore and for thy prowe

Ow herken euerye maner man
That Englysshe vnderstand can
And lysteth of my dreame to here
For now at erst shal ye here
So selly and so dredefull a vysyon
That I dare neyther Scipion
Ne kynge Nabugodonosore
Pharao, Turnus ne Alcanore
Ne metten such a dreame as thys
Nowe fayre blysfull, O Cipris
So be my fauour at this tyme
That ye me tendyte, and ryme
Helpeth that in Pernaso dwell
Besyde Elycon the clere well
O thought, that wrote all that I met
And in the treasorye it set
Of my brayne, nowe shall men se
If any vertue in the be
To tell all my dreme aryght

Lette se, darst thou loke yet nowe
Be ful ensured boldely
I am thy frende, and therwith I
Gan for to wonder in my mynde
O god (quod I) that madest al kynde
Shal I none otherwyse dye
Whether Ioue wyll me stellyfye
Or what thynge may this signifye
I am neyther Enocke ne Helye
Ne Romulus, ne Ganemede
That were boze vp as men rede
To heuen with dan Iupiter
And made the goddes botelier
Lo, this was tho my fantasye
But he that bare gan espy
That I so thought, and sayde this
Thou demest of thy selfe amys
For Ioue is not there aboute
I dare the put ful out of doute
To make of the yet a sterre
But er I bere the moche ferre
I wyl the tel what I am
And whyther thou shalte, and why I cam
To do this, so that thou take
Good herte, and not for fere quake
Gladly (quod I) nowe wel (quod he)
First, I that in my lere haue the
Of whom thou hast feare and wonder
I am dwellyng with the god of thonder
Whych men callen Iupiter
That doth me flyen ful ofte fer
To do al hys commaundement
And for thys cause he hathe me sent
To the derke nowe by thy trouth
Certaynly he hath of the routh
That thou hast so truely
Longe serued entierely
Hys blynde neuewe Cupido
And fayre Venus also
Wythout guerdon euer yet
And nethcles hast set thy wyt
Although in thy herd full lytle is
To make bokes, songes, and dytes
In ryme, or els in cadence
As thou best canst in reuerence
Of loue, and of hys seruauntes eke
That haue his seruyce sought, and seke
And paynest the to playse his arte
Although thou haddest neuer parte
Wherfore also god me blesse
Ioues halte it greate humblesse
And vertue eke, that thou wylt make
Anyght full ofte thyne heed to ake
In thy studye so thou wrytest
And euermore of loue endytest
In honour of hym and playsynges
And in hys folkes furtherynges
And in her matter al deuysest
And not hym ne his folke dispisest
Although thou mayst go in the daunce
Of hem, that hym lyst not auaunce
Wherfore as I sayd ywys
Iupiter consydereth wel thys
And also beausyre, of other thynges
That is, thou hast no tydynges
Of loues folke yf they be glade
Ne of nothynge els that god made
And not onely fro farre countre
That no tydynges comen to the
Not of thy very neyghbours
That dwellen almoost at thy doores
Thou herest neyther that ne thys
For whan thy labour al done is
And hast made all thy reherynges
In stede of rest and of newe thynges
Thou goest home to thyne house anone
And also dombe as a stone
Thou syttest at another boke
Tyl fully dased is thy loke
And hyrynst thus as an Hermyte
Although thynne abstinence is lyte
And therfore Ioues, through hys grace
Wyl that I bere the to a place
Whiche that hyght the house of Fame
And to do the sporte and game
In some recompensatioun
Of thy labour and deuotioun
That thou hast had, to causeles
To god Cupido the recheles
And thus thys god through hys merite
Wyl werth some maner thynge the quyte
So that thou wylte be of good chere
For trust well that thou shalt here
Whan we be comen there as I saye
No wonder thynges dare I laye
And of loues folke mo tydynges
Both soth and lesynges
And mo loues newe begon
And longe serued tyl loue is won
And mo louers casually
That bene betydde, no man wote why
But as a blynde man starteth an Hare
And more lolyte and welfare
Whyle they fynde loue of stele

As thynke men, and ouer all wele
Mo discordes and mo talousyes
Mo murmures, and mo nouelryes
And also mo dissimulacions
And eke feyned reperacions
And mo berdes in two houres
wythout rasour or sysoures
ymade, than gravnes be of sandes
And eke mo holdyng in mo handes
And also mo renouelaunces
Of olde foolketen acqueyntaunces
Mo louedayes, and mo accordes
Than on instrumentes bene cordes
And eke of loue mo exchaunges
Than euer come were in graunges
Lyketh mayst thou trowen this
(Quod he) no so me helpe god as wys
(Quod I) No why (quod he) for it
were impossible to my wyt
Though fame had all the pyes
In al a realme and al espyes
Dowe that yet he shulde here al thys
Or they espyen. Oyes yes
(Quod he) to me that can I preue
By reason, worthy for to leue
So that thou geue thyne aduertence
To vnderstande my sentence
I rede that thou here where she dwelleth
Right so as thyne owne boke telleth
Her palays standeth as I shall say
Right euen amyddes of the way
Betwene heuen, erth, and see
That what so euer in all these thre
Is spoken in pryue or apert
The way therto is so ouert
And stante eke in so wyde a place
That euery sowne mote to it pace
Or what so cometh from any tonge
Be it rowned, redde, or songe
Or spoken in sorete or drede
Certayne it mote thyther nede
Nowe herken wel, for why I wyl
Tellen the a proper skyl
And a worthy demonstracion
In myne ymaginacyon
(Sestrau, thou wottest wel thys
That euery kyndly thynge that is
Hath a kyndly stede there he
Wold best in it conserued be
Vnto whiche place euery thynge
Through his kyndly enclynynge
Hyeth for to come to
whan that it is awaye therfro
Is thus. Lo howe thou mayst al day se
Take any thynge that heuy be
As stone or leed, or thyng of weyght
And bere it neuer so hye on heyght
Let go thyne hande, it falleth downe
Right so say I by fyre or sowne
Or smoke, or other thynges lyght
Alwaye they seke vpwarde on heyght
Lyght thynges vp, and downwarde charge
whyle euerych of hem be at large
And for thys cause, thou mayst well se
That euery ryuer vnto the see
Enclyned is to go by kynde
And by these skylles as I fynde
Haue fysshes dwellyng in flode and see
And trees eke on the erth be
Thus euery thynge by hys reason
Hath his owne proper mansion
To whiche he seketh to repeyre
There as it shulde not appeyre
Lo, thys sentence is knowen couth
Of euery philosophers mouth
As Aristotle, and dan Platone
And other clerkes many one
And to confirme my reasoun
Thou wost wel that speche is sowne
Or els no man might it here
Nowe herke what I wyl the lere
Sowne is not but eyre ybroken
And euery speche that is spoken
Loude or pryue, foule or fayre
In hys substaunce is but eyre
For as flame is but lyghted smoke
Right so is sowne eyre ybroke
But thys may be in many wyse
Of whych I wyl the deuyse
As sowne cometh of pype or harpe
For whan a pype is blowen sharpe
The eyre is twyst wyth violence
And rent: Lo, thys is my sentence
Eke, whan men harpe strynges smyte
whether it be muche or lyte
Lo, wyth the stroke the eyre to breketh
And eyght so breketh it whan men speketh
Thus wost thou well what thing is speche
Nowe henforth, I wyl the teche
Howe euery speche, voyce or sowne
Through his multiplycacyowne
Thoughe it were ypped of a mouse
Mote nedes come to Fames house
I proue it thus, take hede nowe

By experience, for yf that thou
Threwe in a water nowe a stone
well woost thou it wyl make anone
A lytle roundle as a cercle
Paraventure, as brode as a couercle
And ryght anone thou shalte se well
That whele cercle wyl cause another whele
And that the thyrde, and so forthe brother
Euery cercle causynge other
Broder than hym selfe was
And thus fro roundel to compas
Eche about other goynge
Causeth of others sterynge
And multeplyeng euermo
Tyl it be so farre go
That it at bothe brynkes be
Al thoughe thou may it not se
Aboue, yet gothe it alway vnder
Though thou thynke it a greate wonder
And who so sayth of trouthe I vary
Bydde hym proue the contrary
And right thus euery worde ywys
That loud or pryue yspoken is
Moueth first an eyre aboute
And of his mouynge out of doute
Another eyre anone is moued
As I haue of the water proued
That euery cercle causeth other
Right so of eyre my leue brother
Euery eyre in other sterreth
More and more, and speche vp bereth
Or voyce or noyse, worde or sowne
Lyke through multiplicacion owne
Tyl it be at the house of fame
Take it on ernest or in game
nowe haue I tolde, yf thou haue mynde
Howe speche or sowne, of pure kynde
Enclyned was vpwarde to meue
Thys mayst thou fele well by preue
And that some stede ywys
That euery thynge enclyned to is
Hath hys kyndlyche stede
That semeth it wythout drede
That kyndly the mancyoun
Of euery speche of euery soun
Be it eyther soule or fayre
Hath hys kynde place in eyre
And syth that euery thynge ywys
Out of hys kynde place ywys
Moueth thyder for to go
If it awaye be therfro
As I haue before proued the

It semeth euery soune perde
Moueth kyndly to pace
As vp into hys kynde place
And thys place of which I tell
There as fame lyst to dwell
Is sette a myddes of these thre
Heuen, erth, and eke the see
As moost conseruatyfe the soun
Than is thys the conclusyoun (:)(:)
That euery speche of euery man
As I the tell fyrst began
Meueth vp on heyght to pace
Kyndly to Fames place
Tel me this nowe faythfully
Haue I not proued thus symply
wythout any subtylte (:)(:)
Of speche, or great prolixite
Of termes of Philosophie
Of fygures of Poetrie
Or colours of rethoryke
Perde it ought the to lyke
For harde langage, and harde matere
Is encombrous for to here
At ones, woost thou not well thys
And I answered and sayd yes
Ha ha quod he lo so I can
Lewdly vnto a lewde man
Speke and shewe hym suche skryttes
That he maye shake hem by the bylles
So palpable they shulden be
But tell me thys nowe praye I the
Howe thynketh the my conclusyoun
A good persuasyon
(Quod I) it is and lyke to be
Ryght so as thou hast proued me
By god quod he and as I leue
Thou shalte haue yet or it be eue
Of euery worde of thys sentence
A profe, by experience
And wyth thyne eares heren well
Toppe and tayle, and euery dell
That euery worde that spoken is
Cometh into Fames house ywys
As I haue sayde what wyte thou more
And wyth thys worde vpper to sore
He began, and sayde by saynt Jame
Nowe wyll we speke all of game
Nowe farest thou nowe quod he to me
well quod I nowe se quod he
By the trouth vonde adowne
where that thou knowest any towne
Or house, or any other thynge

And

And whan thou hast of aught knowynge
Loke that thou warne me
And I anoue shall tel the
Howe farre that thou arte nowe therfro
And I adowne gan to loken tho
And beheelde feldes and playns
Nowe hylles, and nowe mountayns
Nowe valeys, and nowe forestes
And nowe vnneth great beestes
Nowe ryuers, nowe Cities
Nowe townes, nowe great trees
Nowe shippes sayling in the see
But this soone in a whyle he
was flowen fro the grounde so hye
That al the worlde as to myne eye
No more semed than a pricke
Or els was the eyre so thycke
That I might it not deserne
with that he spake to me so yerne
And sayde: Seest thou any token
Or aught, that in this worlde is spoken
I sayde nay, no wonder is
(Quod he) For neuer halte so hye as this
Was Alexander of Macedon
kyng Ne of Rome dan Scipion
That sawe in dreme at poynt deuyse
Heuen and erth, hel and paradyse
Ne eke the wretche Dedalus
Ne his chylde nyce Icharus
That flewe so hye, that the hete
his wynges molte, and he fel wete
In myddes the see, and there he dreynte
For whom was made a great complaynte
Nowe tourne vpwarde (quod he) thy face
And beholde this large space
This eyre, but loke that thou ne be
Adead of hem that thou shalt se
For in this region certeyne
Dwelleth many a cyrcleyne
Of whiche speketh dan Plato
These ben the eyrysshe beestes lo
And tho sawe I al the menye
Bothe gone and also flye
Lo quod he caste vp thyne eye
Seyrondet lo the Galaxye
The whiche men clepe the mylky way
For it is whyte: And some perfay
Callen it watlynge strete
That ones was brente with the hete
whan the sonnes sonne the reade
That hyte Pheton wolde leade
In gate his fathers carte, and gye
The carte horse gan well espye
That he coude no gouernaunce
And gan for to lepe and praunce
And beare hym vp and nowe downe
Tyll he sawe the Scorpiowne
which that in heuen a sygne is yet
And he for feare lost his wyt
Of that, and let the reynes gone
Of his horse, and they anone
Gone vp to mount, and downe discende
Tyll both eyre and erth brende
Tyll Jupiter lo, at the last
Hym slowe, and fro the carte cast
Lo, is it not a great myschaunce
To let a foole haue gouernaunce
Of thynges that he can not demayne
And with this worde forth for to sayne
He gan alway vppet to sore
And gladed me than more and more
So lay-bully to me spake he
Tho gan I to loke vnder me
And beheelde the eyrysh beestes
Cloudes, mystes, and tempestes
Snowes, haryes, raynes and wyndes
And than gendryng in her kyndes
All the waye through which I came
O God quod I that made Adam
Moche is thy myght and nobles
And tho thought I vpon Boece
That writeth, a thought may flye so hye
with fethers of philosophye
To passen euerych element
And whan he hath so farre ywent
Than may he seme behynde his bake
Cloude and erth, and all that of I spake
Tho gan I wexe in a were
And sayde, I wot wel I am here
But whether in body or in ghost
I not ywys, but god thou woost
For more clere entendement
Nas me neuer yet ysent
And than thought I on Martyan
And eke of Anteclaudian
That soth was her description
Of all the heauens regyon
As farre as that I sawe the prene
And therfore I can hem leue
with that the Egle gan to crye
Let be, quod he thy fantasye
Wylt thou lere of sterres ought
Nay certaynly (quod I) ryght nought
And why (quod he) for I am olde

Or elis wolde I the haue tolde
(Quod he) the starres names lo
And all the heuens sygnes to
And which they be: No force (q I)
Yes parde (quod he) wost thou why
For whan thou redest poetrye
How the goddes can stellyfy
Byrde, fysh, or hym, or her
As the Rauyn and other
Or Arions harpe fyne
Castor, Pollux, or Delphyne
Or Athalantes doughters seuen
How all these are set in heuen
For though thou haue hem oft in hande
Yet nost thou nat where they stande
No force (quod I) it is no nede
As well I leue so god me spede
Hem that wryten of this matere
As though I knewe her places here
And eke thy seluen here so brygbt
It shoulde shenden all my sygbt
To loke on hem that maye wel be
(Quod he) and so for the bare he me
A whyle, and tho began to crye
That neuer herde I thynge so hye
Holde vp thyne heed, for all is well
Saynct Julyan lo, bonne hostel
Se here the house of Fame, lo
Nayest thou not here that I do
What (quod I) the great sowne
(Quod he) that combleth vp and downe
In Fames house full of tydynges
Both of fayre speche and chydynges
And of false and soth compowned
Herken well it is not rowned
Hearest thou not the great swough
Yes perde (quod I) well ynough
And what sowne is it lyke (quod he)
Peter, lyke the beatyng of the see
(Quod I) agayns the rockes holowe
Whan tempestes done her shyppes swalowe
And that a man stande out of doute
A myle thence, and here it route
Or elis lyke the humblyng
After the clappe of a thundrynge
Whan Ioues hath the eyre ybete
But it doth me for feare swete
Nay, drede the not therof (quod he)
It is nothyng that wyll byten the
Thou shalt haue no harme truly
And with that worde both he and I
As nygh the place aryued were
As men myght cast with a spere
I nyst how, but in a strete
He set me fayre on my fete
And sayde: walke forth a pace
And tell thyne aduenture and case
That thou shalt fynde in fames place
Now (quod I) whyle we haue space
To speke, or that I go fro the
For the loue of god tell me
In soth, that I wyll of the lere
Yf this noyse that I here
Be as I haue herde the tell
Of folke that downe in erth dwell
And cómeth here in the same wyse
As I the herde or this deuyse
And that here lyues body nys
In all that house that yonder is
That maketh all this loude fare
No (quod he) by sayncte Clare
And also wysse god rede me
But o thynge I wyl warne the
Of the which thou wrlt haue wonder
Lo, to the house of Fame yonder
Thou wost how cómeth euery speche
It nedeth not the efte to teche
But vnderstande now ryght well this
Whan any speche ycomen is
Vp to the palays anon ryght
It weyeth lyke the same wyght
Which that the worde in erth spake
Be he clothed in red or blake
And hath so very his lykenesse
And spake the worde that thou wylt gesse
That it the same body be
Man or womon, he or she
And is not this a wonder thynge
Yes (quod I tho) by heuen kynge
And with this worde, farewel (q he)
And here wyll I abyde the
And god of heuen sende the grace
Some good to lerne in this place
And I of hym toke leaue anone
And gan forth to the palayes gone.

Explicit liber secundus.

God

GOd of scyence and of lyght
Apollo, throughe thy great myght
Thys lytle last booke now thou gyve
Not that I wyll for mayster stryve
Here art potentiall be shewde
But for the ryme is lyght and lewde
yet make it somwhat agreable
Though some vers fayle in a syllable
And that I do no diligence
To shewe craft, but sentence
And yf deuyne vertue thou
wylt helpe me to shewe nowe
That in my hed ymarked is
Lo, that is for to meanen this
The house of Fame for to discryue
Thou shalt se me go as blyue
Unto the nerr laurer I se
And kysse it, for it is thy tree (c)
Now entre in my brest anone
whan I was from the Egle gone
I gan beholde vpon this place
And certayne or I forther pace
I woll you all the shappe deuyse
Of house and cyte, and all the wyse
How I gan to this place approche
That stode vpon so hye a roche
Ner standeth none in Spayne
But vp I clambe with moche payne
And though to clymbe greued me
yet I entendyde was to se
And for to pouren wonder lowe
yf I coude anywyse yknowe
what maner stone this roche was
For it was lyke a lymed glas
But that it shone full more clere
But of what congeled matere
It was, I nyst redely (r)
But at the last espyed I
And fonde that it was euery dele
A roche of yse, and not of stele
Thought I by sayne Thomas of Kent
This were a feble foundement
To buylden on a place hye
he ought hym lytle to gloryfye
That heron buylte, god so me same
Tho sawe I all the hall ygraue
with famous folkes names fele
That had bene in moche wele
And her fames wyde yblowe
But well vneth myght I knowe
Any letters for to rede
Her names by, for out of drede
They weren almoost of thawed so
That of the letters one or two
were molte away of euery name
So vnfamous was were her fame.
But men say, what may euer last
Tho gan I in myne hert cast
That they were molte away for hete
And not away with stormes bete
For on that other syde I sey
Of this hyll, that northwarde ley
How it was wryten ful of names
Of folke that had afore great fames
Of olde tyme, and yet they were
As fresh as men had wryten hem there
The selfe day, or that houre
That I on hem gan to poure
But well I wyst what it made
It was conserued with the shade
All the wrytyng that I sye
Of a Castell that stode on hye
And stode eke in so colde a place
That heate myght it not deface
Tho gan I on this hyll to gone
And founde on the coppe a wone
That all the men that ben on lyue
Ne han the connyng to discryue
The beautie of that ylke place
Ne coude cast no compace
Suche an other for to make
That myght of beautie be his make
Ne so wondrely ywrought
That it astonyeth yet my thought
And maketh all my wyt to wynke
On this castell for to thynke
So that the great beautie
The cast, craft, and curiositie
Ne can I not to you deuyse
My wyt, ne may me not suffyse
But natheless all the substaunce
I haue yet in my remembraunce
For why, me thought by sayne Gyle
Al was of stone of Beryle
Both the castell and the toure
And eke the hall, and euery boure
without peces or ioynynges
But many subtell compassynges
As babewries and pynnacles
ymagories

Ymageries and tabernacles
I sawe, and full eke of wyndowes
As flakes fallen in great snowes
And eke in eche of the pynacles
weren sondrye habytacles
In which stoden all withouten
Full the castell all abouten
Of all maner of mynstrales
And iestours that tellen tales
Both of wepyng and of game
And of all that longeth vnto fame
There herde I play on an harpe
That sowned both well and sharpe
Hym Orpheus full craftely
And on this syde fast by
Satte the harper Quon
And Gacides Chiron
And other harpers many one
And the Briton Glasgyone
And smal harpers with her glees
Sat vnder them in dyuers sees
And gon on hem vpwarde to gape
And counterfayted hem as an ape
Or as a craft counterfayte kynde
Tho sawe I stonden hem behynde
Afarre from hem, all by hem selue
Many a thousande tymes twelue
That made loude mynstralsyes
In cornmuse and shalmyes
And many an other pype
That craftely began to pype
Both in douced and in rede
That beme at festes with the brede
And many a floyte and lytlynge horne
And pypes made of grene corne
As haue these lytle herde gromes
That kepen beestes in the bromes
Ther sawe I than dan Cytherus
And of Athenes dan Proserus
And Marcia that lost her sayme
Both in face, body, and chyme
For that she wolde enuyen so
To pypen better than Apollo
There sawe I eke famous olde and yonge
Pypers of all the duche tonge
To lerne loue daunces, springes
Reyes, and the straunge thynges
Tho sawe I in an other place
Stondyng in a large space
Of hem that maken blody soun
In trumpe, bemne, and claryoun
For in fyght and blood sheddynges
Is vsed gladly clarionynges
There herde I trumpe Hellenus
Of whom that speketh Virgilius
There herde I Joab trumpe also
Theodomas and other mo
And all that vsed clarion
In Castelorgne, and Aragon
That in her tymes famous were
To lernen sawe I trumpen there
There sawe I sit in other sees
Playing vpon other sondry glees
which that I can not neuen
So than flattes ben in heuen
Of which I nyl as now not ryme
For ease of you, and losse of tyme
For tyme ylost, this knowe ye
Vnto way maye recounted be
There sawe I playing tuggelours
Pageyens and tragitours
And Phetonysses charmeresses
Olde wytches, sorceresses
That vsen experimentes
And eke fumigations
And clerkes eke which conne well
All this magyke naturell
That craftely do her ententes
To maken in certayne accidentes
Ymages lo, through which magyke
To maken a man ben hole or sicke
There sawe I the queue Medea
And Cyrces eke, and Calipsa
There sawe I Hermes Ballenus
Lymote, and eke Simon Magus
There sawe I, and knewe by name
That by suche arte done, men haue fame
There sawe I Coll tregetour
Vpon a table of Sycamour
Playe an vncouth thyng to tell
I sawe hym carry a wynde mell
Vnder a walnote shale
what shulde I make lenger tale
Of al the people that I sey
I coude not tell tyll domisdey
whan I had all this folke beholde
And founde me lose and not holde
And I awaked a longe whyle
Vpon this wall of Beryle
That shone lyghter than a glas
And made well more than it was
Is kyndely thyng of fame is
And than anon after this
I gan forth romen tyll I fonde

The

The castell yate on my ryght honde
which so wel corven was
That neuer suche another nas
And yet it was by auenture
ywrought by great and subtyll cure
It nedeth not you more to tellen
To make you to longe dwellen
Of these yates florysshynges
Ne of compaces ne of karuynges
Ne how the backwng in masonryes
Is corbettes and ymagerye
But Lorde so fayre it was to shewe
For it was all with golde bebewe
But in I went and that anone
There met I crying many one
A larges a larges holde vp well
God saue the lady of this pell
Our owne gentle lady Fame
And hem that writen to haue a name
Of vs thus heede I crven all
And fast comen out of the hall
And shoke nobles and florynges
And crownes were as kynges
with crownes wrought full of losenges
And many rybans and many frynges
were on her clothes truly
Tho at the last espyed I
That pursenaunites and heraudes
That crven ryche folkes laudes
It weren all and euery man
Of hem as I you tell can
Had on hem rycwe a vesture
which men clepe a cote armure
Embroudred wonderly ryche
As though they were not ryche
But nought wyl I so mote I thryue
Be about to discryue
All these armes that there weren
That they thus on her cotes weren
For it to me were impossyble
Ben myght I ake of hem a byble
Twenty fote thycke as I trowe
For certayne whoso couldc knowe
Ryght there all the armes sene
Of famous folke that had been
In Affryke Europe and Asye
Syth fyrst began chevalrye
Lo how shulde I now tell all this
Ne of the hall eke what nede is
To tellen you that euery wall
Of it and rofe and flore withall
was plated halfe a fote thycke
Of golde and that nas not wycke
But for to proue in all wyse
As fyne as ducket in Venyse
Of which to lyte all in my pouche is
And they were set as thycke of ouches
Fyne of the fynest stones fayre
That men reden in the lapidayre
Or as grasses growen in a mede
But it were all to longe to rede
The names and therfore I pace
But in this lustye and ryche place
That Fames hall called was
Full moche prees of folke there nas
Ne croudyng for to moche prees
But all on hye about a dees
Satte in a see imperial
That made was of a Ruby royall
which that a carbuncle is ycalled
I sawe perpetually ystalled
A femynine creature
That neuer formed by nature
was suche an other thyng I say
For altherfyrst sothe to say
Me thought that she was so lyte
That the length of a cubyte
was lenger than she semed be
But thus soone a in whyle she
Her sette tho wonderly streyght
That with her fete the therth reyght
And with her heed she touched heuen
There as thyneth the sterres seuen
And therto yet as to my wyt
I sawe a great wonder yet
Vpon her eyen to beholde
But certaynly I hem neuer tolde
For as fele eyen had she
As fethers vpon foules be
Or weren on the beestes foure
That gods trone can honoure
As wryteth John in the Apocalyps
Of her there was owndy and cryps
As burned golde it shone to se
And eeth to tellen also she
Had also fele vp standyng eares
And tonges as on beest ben heres
And on her sete woren sawe I
Partriche wynges redely
But lorde the perry and the rychesse
I sawe syttynge on the goddesse
And the heuenly melody
Of fowles full of armony
I herde about her trone ysonge

That

That all the pallayes wall rouge
So longe the myghty Muse she
That cleped is Caliope
And her seuen systermeeke
That can her laces seuen meke
And euermoze eternally
The longe of fame tho herde I
Herryed be thou and thy name
Goddes of renoun and of fame
Tho was I ware at the last
As I myne eyen gan vp cast
That this yike noble quene
On her shulders gan sustene
Both the armes and the name
Of tho that had large fame
Alysandze and Hercules
That with a shertc his lyfe dyd lese
And this founde I syttyng this goddesse
In noble honour and rychesse
Of which I stynt a whyle nowe
Ether thyng to tellen you
Tho sawe I stande on thether syde
Estcryght downe to the doze wyde
From the doze many a pyllere
Of metall that thone not full clere
But though they were of no rychesse
Yet were they made for great nobilesse
And in hem great sentence
And lolke of hye and digne reuerence
Of which to tell wyll I fonde
Vpon a pyller sawe I stonde
Alderhyest there I sye
Vpon a pyller stonde on hye
That was of lede and of vron fyne
Dym of the secte saturnyne
The Chaldeke Josephus the olde
That of Jewes gestes tolde
And he bare on his shulders hye
The fame vp of the Jurye
And by hym stoden other seuen
Wyse and worthy for to neuen
To helpen hym bere vp the charge
It was so heuy and so large
And for they wryten of batayles
As well as of other marnayles
Therfore was to this pyllere
Of which I you tell here
Of leed and vron both ywys
For vron Marres metall is
Which that god of battayle
And the leed without en fayle
Is lo, the metall of Saturne
That hath full large whyle to turne
To stande forth on eyther towe
Of hem, which I coude knowe
Though I by ordre hem not tell
To make you to longe to dwell
Thes of which I gan rede
There sawe I stande out of drede
Vpon an vron pyller stronge
That paynted was al endlonge
With Tygres bloud in euery place
The Tholason that bygat Stace
That bare of Thebes vp the name
Vpon his shulders, and the fame
Also of Cruell Achylles
And by hym stode without en lees
Full wonder hygh vpon a pyller
Of vron, he the great Omer
And with hym Dares and Titus
Before, and eke he Lollius
And Gurdo eke de Colempnis
And englysh Galfride eke ywys
And eche of these as I haue toy
Was busy to brare vp Troy
So heuy ther of was the fame
That for to brare it was no game
But yet I gan full well espye
Bet wene hem was a lytle enuy
One sayde, that Omer made lyes
Feynyng in his poetryes
And was to the grekes fauourable
Therfore holde he it but fable
Tho sawe I stande on a pyllere
That was of tynned vron clere
The latyn poete Virgyle
That hath bore vp a longe whyle
The fame of Pius Eneas
And nere hym on a pyller was
Of copper, Alenus clerke Ouyde
That hath so wen wonders wyde
The great god of loues fame
And there he bare vp well his name
Vpon this pyller al so hye
As I myght se it with myne eye
For why this hall whereof I rede
was wore on heyght, length, and brede
wel more by a thousande dele
Than it was erst, that sawe I wele
Tho sawe I on a pyller by
Of vron wrought full sternely
The great poete dan Lucan
That on his shulders bare vp than
As hye as that I myght se

The fame of Julyus and Pompee
And by hym stoden all these clerkes
That wryte of Romes mighty werkes
That yf I wolde her names tell
All to longe must I dwell
And nerre hym on a pyller stode
Of Sulphure, lyche as he were wode
Dan Claudian, sothe for to tell
That bare vp all the fame of Hell
Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne
That quene is of the derke pyne
What shulde I more tell of thys
The hall was all full fwis
Of hem that wryten olde iestes
As ben on trees rokes nestes
But it a full confuse matere
were all these iestes for to here
That they of wryte, and he we they hyght
But whyle that I behelde thys fyght
I herde a noyse approchen blyue
That fareth as bees done in an hyue
Ayenst her tyme of out flyenge
Right suche a maner murmurynge
For all the worlde it semed me
Tho gan I loke aboute and se
That there come entrynge in to the hall
A ryght great company wyrthall
And that of sondry regyons
Of all kyns condycyons
That dwell in erthe vnder the moone
Poore and ryche, and also soone
As they were come in to the hall
They gan on knees downe to fall
Before thys ylke noble quene
And sayd, graunt vs lady shene
Che of vs of thy grace aboue
And some of hem she graunted soone
And some she warned well and fayre
And some she graunted the contrayre
Of her askynge vtterly
But thys I say you trewly
What her grace was I nyst
For of these folke full well I wyst
They had good fame eche deserued
All though they were dyuersly serued
Right as her syster dame Fortune
Is wonte to serue in commune
Nowe herken howe she gan to paye
Hem that gan her of grace praye
And yet lo, all thys company
Seyden sothe, and not a lye
Madame sayde they, we be
Folke that here beseechen the
That thou graunt vs nowe good fame
And let our workes haue good name
In full recompensacioun
Of good worke, gyue vs good renoun
I warne it you (quod she) anone
Ye gete of me good fame none
By god, and therfore go your way
Alas (quod they) and welaway
Tell vs what your cause may be
For me lyste it not (quod she)
No wyght shall speke of you ywis
Good ne harme, ne that ne this
And wyth that worde she gan to cal
Her messenger that was in hal
And bad that he shulde fast gone
Upon payne to be blynde anone
For Colus the god of wynde
In Trace there ye shall hym fynde
And byd hym bringe his clarioun
That is full dyuers of hys sowne
And it is cleped clere Laude
Wyth whiche he wont is to herande
Hem that me lyst ypraysed be
And also byd hym howe that he
Bringe eke hys other clarioun
That hyght Sclaundre in euery towne
Wyth whyche he wont is to diffame
Hem that me lyst and do hem shame
This messenger gan fast to gone
And founde where in a caue of stone
In a countre that hyght Trace
Thys Colus wyth harde grace
Held the wyndes in distresse
And gan hem vnder hym to presse
That they gone as the beres roze
He bounde and pressed hem so sore
Thys messenger gan fast crye
Kyste vp (quod he) and fast the hye
Tyll thou at my lady be
And take thy clarions eke wyth the
And spede the fast, and be anone
Toke to one that hyght Tritone
Hys clarions to beten tho
And let a certayne wynde go
That blewe so hydously and hye
That it ne lefte not a skye
In all the welken longe and brode
Thys Colus no where abode
Tyll he was come to Fames fete
And eke the man that Triton hete
And there he stode as styll as stone

And here wythall there came anone
Another huge company
Of good folke and gan to crye
Lady, graunt vs nowe good fame
And let our workes haue that name
Nowe in honour of grenyuelle
And also god your soule bielle
For we han well deserued it
Therfore is ryght that we be quyt
As thryue I (q̄ she) ye shall fayle
Good workes shall you not auayle
To haue of me good fame as nowe
But wote ye what, I graunt powe
That ye shall haue a shrewde name
And wycked loos, and worst fame
Thoughe ye good loos haue well deserued
Nowe gothe your way for ye ben serued
And thou dan Colus (q̄ she)
Take forthe thy trumpe anone let se
That is yclepyd Sclaundre lyght
And blowe her loos, that euery wyght
Speke of hem harme and shrewdnesse
In stede of good and worthynesse
For thou shalte trumpe all the contrayre
Of that they haue done, well or fayre
Alas thought I what auentures
Haue these lozy creatures
That they amonge all the prees
Shulde thus be shamed gyltles
But what, it must nedes be
what dyd this Colus, but he
Toke out hys blacke trumpe of bras
That fouler than the deuyll was
And gan this trumpe for to blowe
As all the worlde sholde ouerthrowe
Throughout euery regioun
Went this foule trumpes soun
As soyte as a pellet out of a gonne
whan fyre is in the poulder ronne
And suche a smoke gan out wende
Out of the foule trumpes ende
Blacke, blo, grenysshe, swartysshe reds
As dothe where that men melte lede
Lo, all on hye from te well
And therto one thynge sawe I well
That the ferther that it ranne
The greter weren it began
As dothe the ryuer frome a well
And it stanke as the pyt of hell
Alas, thus was her shame ysprunge
And gyltelesse on euery tonge
Tho came the thyrde company
And gone vp to the dees to hye
And downe on knees they fell anon
And sayden, we ben euerychon
Folke that han full trewly
Deserued fame ryghtfully
And prayde you it myght be knowe
Ryght as it is, and forthe blowe
I graunt (q̄ she) for nowe me lyste
That your good workes shall be wyst
And yet ye shall haue better loos
Ryght in dyspyte of all your foos
Than worthy is, and that anone
Lette nowe (q̄ she) thy trumpe gone
Thou Colus, that is so blake
And out thyne other trumpe take
That hyght Laude, and blowe it so
That through the worlde her fame go
All euenly and nat to fast
That it be knowen at the last
Full gladly lady myne he sayde
And out hys trumpe of golde he brayde
Anone, and sette it to hys mouthe
And blewe it est, west, and southe
And northe, as loude as any thonder
That euery wyght hath of it wonder
So blode it ran or that it stent
And certes all the brethe that went
Out of hys trumpes mouthe smelde
As men a potte full of baume helde
Amonge a basket full of roses
This fauour dyd he to her loses
And ryght wyth this I gan espy
There came the fourth company
But certayne they were wonder fewe
And gonne to standen on a rewe
And sayden, certes lady bryght
we haue done well wyth all oure myght
But we ne kepe to haue fame
Hyde our workes and our name
For goddes loue, for certes we
Haue surely done it for bounte
And for no maner other thyng
I graunt you all your askyng
(q̄ she) let your workes be dede
Wyth that aboute I tourned my heed
And sawe anon the fyfte route
That to thys lady gan loute
And downe on knees anone to fall
And to her tho besoughten all
To hyden her good werkes eke
And sayd, they yeue nat a leke
For no fame, ne suche renoun

For ther

For they for contemplacioun
And goddes loue had it wrought
Ne of fame wolde they nought
What (q̄ she) and be ye woode
And were ye for to do good
And for to haue of that no fame
Haue ye dispyte to haue my name
Nay ye shall lyen euerychone
Blowe thy trumpe and that anone
(q̄ she) thou Eolus I bote
And tynge these folkes workes by note
That all the worlde may of it here
And he gan blowe her loos so clere
In hys golden clartoun
That through the worlde went the soun
All so kendly, and eke so softe
That ther: fame was blowe a lofte
Tho came the fyrst companye
And gan fall to Fame crye
Right verily in thys manere
They sayden, mercy lady dere
To tell certayne as it is
We haue done nevther that ne thys
But ydell all our lyfe hath be
But natheless yet pray we
That we may haue as good a fame
And great renome and knowen name
As they that haue do noble festes
And achieued all her questes
As well of loue as other thyng
All was vs neuer broche ne tyng
Ne els what fro women sent
Ne ones in her herte yment
To maken vs onely frendly chere
But mought temen vs on here
Yet let vs to the people seme
Suche as the worlde may of vs deme
That women louen vs for woode
It shall do vs as moche good
And to our herte as moche ausyle
The counterpeyse, ease, and trauayle
As we had wone wyth labour
For that is dere bought honoure
Ayt regarde of our great ease
And yet ye muste vs more please
Let vs be holde eke therto
worthy, wyse, and good also
And ryche, and happy vnto loue
For goddes loue that syteth aboue
Though we may nat the body haue
Of women, yet so god me saue
Lette men gyrwe on vs the name
Suffyseth that we haue the fame
I graunt (q̄ she) by my trouthe
Nowe Eolus wythouten slouthe
Take out thy trumpe of golde (q̄ she)
And blowe as they haue asked me
That euery man wene hem at ease
Though they go in full badde lease
Thys Eolus gan it so blowe
That through the worlde it was yknowe
Tho came the seuenth route anone
And fyll on knees euerychone
And sayd, lady graunt vs soone
The same thyng, the same boone
That this nett folke haue done
Fye on you (q̄ she) euerychone
Ye mased swyne, ye ydel wretches
Full of roten slowe tetches
What false theues, where ye wolde
Ben famed good, and nothyng nolde
Deserue why, ne neuer thought
Men rather you to hangen ought
For ye be lyke the slepy catte
That wolde haue fysh: but woste thou what?
He woll nothyng were hys clawes
Yuell thryfte come to your lawes
And on myne yf I it graunt
Or do fauour you to auaunt
Thou Eolus, thou kyng of Trace
Go blowe this folke a foxy grace
(q̄ she) anone, and woste thou howe
As I shall tell the right nowe
Say these ben they that wolde honour
Haue, and do no kyns labour
Ne do no good, and yet haue laude
And that men wende that beelle I saude
Ne coude hem nat of loue werne
And yet the that gryntat querne
Is al to good to ease her herte
This Eolus anon vp sterte
And with his blacke clarion
He gan to blasen out a soun
As sounde as belleth wynde in hel
And eke therwith sothe to tel
This sowne was so ful of lapes
As euer mowes were in apes
And that went al the worlde aboute
That euery wight gan on hem shoute
And for to laugh as they were wode
Suche game founde they in her hode
Tho came another company
That had ydone the trecherye
The harme and great wickednesse

That any herte couden gelle
And prayed her to haue good fame
And that ſhe nolde do hem no ſhame
But gyue hem loos and good renoun
And do it blowe in clarioun
Nay wys (quod ſhe) it were a vyce
Al be there in me no iuſtyce
Me lyſt nat to do it nowe
Ne this I nyl graunt it you
Tho came there leapyng in a route
And gan clappen al aboute
Euery man vpon the crowne
That al the hall gan toſowne
And ſayd, lady lefe and dere
we ben ſuche folkys as ye may here
To tel al the tale a ryght
we ben ſhrewes euery wyght
And haue delyte in wickednelle
As good folke haue in goodnelle
And loye to beknowen ſhrewes
And ful of vyce and wicked thewes
wherfore we praye you on a rowe
That our fame be ſuche yknowe
In al thing ryght as it is
I graunt it you (quod ſhe) ywys
But what arte thou that ſayeſt this tale
That wearell on thy hoſe a pale
And on thy typpet ſuche a bell
Madame (q he) ſothe to tell
I am that vlke ſhrewe yuys
That brent the temple of Iſydis
In Athenes, lo that eyte
And wherfore dyddeſt thou ſo (q ſhe)
By my trouthe (q he) madame
I wolde fayne haue had a name
As other folke had in the towne
Although they were of great renowne
For her vertue and her thewes
Thought I, as great fame haue ſhrewes
(Though it be naught) for ſhrewdnelle
As good folke haue for goodnelle
And ſythen I may nat haue that one
That other nyll I nat forgone
As for to get a fame here
The temple ſette I all on fyre
Nowe don our loos be blowe ſwythe
As wyſly be thou euer blythe
Gladly (q ſhe) thou Eolus
Herell thou not what they prayen the
Madame yes, full well (q he)
And I wyll trumpen it parde
And toke hys blacke trumpe faſt
And gan to puffen and to blaſte
Tyll it was at the worldes ende
Wyth that I gan aboute wende
For one that ſtode ryght at my bake
We thought full goodly to me ſpake
And ſayd, frende what is thy name
Arte thou come hyder to haue fame
Nay for ſothe frende (q I)
I come nat hyther grant mercy
For no ſuche cauſe by my heed
Suffyſeth me, as I were deed
That no wyght haue my name in honde
I wote my ſelfe beſt howe I ſtonde
For what I dute, or what I thynke
I woll my ſelfe all it drynke
Certayne for the more parte
As ferforthe as I can myne arte
what doeſt thou here than (q he)
(q I) that woll I tell the
The cauſe why I ſtande here
Some newe tydynges for to lere
Some newe thyng I not what
Tydinges eyther thys or that
Of loue, or ſuche thynges glade
For certaynly be that me made
To come hyder, ſayd to me
I ſhulde bothe here and ſe
In this place wonder thynges
But theſe be no ſuche tidynges
As I ment of: No (q he)
And I anſwerde, no parde
For well I wote euer yet
Syth that fyrſt I had wyt
That some folke han deſyred fame
Diuerſly, and loos and name
But certaynly I nyſt howe
Ne where that fame dwelled or nowe
Ne eke of her deſcripcion
Ne alſo her condycion
Ne the order of her dome
Ne we I nat tyll I hyder come
Why than be lo theſe tydynges
That thou nowe hyther bringes
That thou haſte herde (q he) to me
But nowe no force, for well I ſe
what thou deſyreſt for to lere
Come forthe and ſtande no lenger here
And I woll the wythout drede
In to ſuche another place lede
There thou ſhalt here many one
Tho gan I forthe wyth hym gone
Out of the caſtell ſothe to ſey

Tho sawe I stande in a valey
Under the castell faste by
In house, that domus Dedaly
That Laborintus ycleped is
Was made so wonderly twys
Ne halfe so queyntly ywrought
And euermo, as swyfte as thought
Thys queynt house aboute went
That neuermo it styll stent
And there came out so great a noyse
That had it stonde vpon Oyse
Men myght haue herde it easely
To Rome, I trowe sikerly
And the noyse whyche that I herde
For all the worlde ryght so it ferde
As dothe the routyng of the stone
That fro thengyn is letyn gone
And all thys house of whyche I rede
was made of twygges falowe rede
And grene eke, and some were whyte
Suche as men to these cages twyte
Or maken of these panyers
Or els hutches or dossers
That for the swough and for the twygges
Thys house was also full of gygges
And also full eke of chyrkynges
And of many other worlynges
And eke this house hath of entrees
As many as leues ben on trees
In sommer whan they ben grene
And on the rofe yet men may sene
A thousande holes, and well mo
To letten the sowne out go
And by day in euery tyde
Ben all the dores open wyde
And by nyght echo one vnshette
Ne porter is there none to lette
No maner tidynges in to pace
Ne neuer rest is in that place
That it nys fylled full of tidynges
Eyther loude or of whyspervnges
And euer all the houses angles
Is full of rownynges and of tangles
Of werres, of peace, of marryages
Of restes, and of labour of vyages
Of abode of dethe, and of lyfe
Of loue, of hate, accorde, of stryfe
Of losse, of lore, and of wynnynges
Of heale, of syckenesse, or of lesynges
Of tayle wether, and eke of tempestes
Of qualme of folke, and of beestes
Of dyuers transmutacions
Of estates, and eke of regrons
Of trust, of dred, of talousy
Of wytte, of wemmyng, of foly
Of plentie, and of great famyne
Of chepe, of derthe, and of ruyne
Of good or misgouernment
Of lyfe, and of dyuers accydent
And lo, this house of whyche I wryte
Syker be ye it nas nat lyte
For it was sixtie myle of length
Al was the tymbre of no strength
Yet it is founded to endure
Whyle that it lyst to Iuenture
That is the mother of tydynges
As the see of welles and sprynges
And it was shapen lyke a cage
Certes (quod I) in al myn age
Ne sawe I suche an house as this
And as I wondred me ywis
Vpon this house, tho ware was I
Downe myne Egle faste by
was perched hye vpon a stone
And I gan streight to hym gone
And sayd thus, I pray the
That thou a whyle abyde me
For goddes loue, and let me sene
What wonders in that place bene
For yet peraunter I may lere
Some good therin, or somwhat here
That lete me were, or that I went
Peter, that is nowe myn entent
(Quod he to me) therfore I dwel
But certaynly one thyng I the tel
That but I bringe the therin
Ne shal thou neuer conne the gyn
To come in to it, out of doute
So faste it whyrleth to aboute
But sythe that I Joues of his grace
As I haue sayd, wyl the solace
Fynally with these thynges
Vncouthe syghtes and tidynges
To passe with thyne heuynesse
Suche couthe hath he of thy distresse
That thou suffredest debonairly
And woste thy seluen vtterly
Desperate of al blysse
Sythe that fortune hath made a mysse
The swote of al thyn hertes rest
Languysshe, and eke in poynte to brest
But he through his myghtie meryte
wyl do the ease, al be it lyte
aue in erpresse commaundement

To whyche I am obedyent
To forther the wyth all my myght
And wysse and teche the a tyght
where thou mayste moste tidynges here
Thou shalte here many one lere
With thys worde he tyght anone
Hent me vp betwene hys tone
And at a wyndowe in me brought
That in thys house was, as me thought
And there wythall me thought it stent
And nothyng it about went
And me sette in the floore adoun
But suche a great congregacioun
Of folke, as I sawe come aboute
Some wythin and some wythout
Nas neuer sene, ne shall be ette
That certes in thys worlde nys lette
So many formed by nature
Ne deed so many a creature
That well wmeth in that place
Had I a foote brede of space
And euery wyght that I sawe there
Rowned euerych in others ere
A newe tydynge pryuely
Or elis it tolde all openly
Right thus, and sayde: Hast nat thou
That is be tydde, lo right nowe
No, q he tel me what
And than he tolde hym thys and that
And swore therto, that it was sothe
Thus hath he sayde, and thus he dothe
And thys shall be, and thus herde I say
That shall be founde, that dare I laye
That all the folke that is on lyue
Ne haue the comyng to discryue
The tydynges that I herde there
what a loude, and what in ere
But all the wonder moste was thys
whan one had herde a thyng ywis
He came streyght to another wyght
And gan hym tellen anon right
The same that hym was tolde
Or it a furlonge way was olde
And gan somwhat for to erre
To thys tydyng in thys speche
More than euer it spoken was
And nat so sone departed nas
The fro hym that he ne mette
With the thyrde, and er he lette
Any stounde, he tolde hym alse
were the tydynges sothe or false
Yet wolde he tell it natheles
And euer mo wyth more encrees
Than it was erst: thus north and south
went euery tydyng, fro mouthe to mouthe
And that encreasyng euermo
As fyre is wonte to quycken and go
Frome a sparcle sprongen amys
Tyll all a eyre brent vp is
And whan that was full vp spronge
And waxen more on euerye tonge
Than euer it was, and went anone
Vp to a wyndowe out to gone
Or but it myght out there passe
It gan out crepe at some crenasse
And flewe forthe faste for the nones
And sometyme I sawe there at ones
A leasynge, and a sadde sothe sawe
That gonnen of auenture drawe
Out of a wyndowe for to pace
And whan they metten in that place
They were a checked bothe two
And neyther of hem myght out go
For eche other they gonne so croude
Tyll eche of hem gan cryen loude
Let me gon fyrst, nay but let me
And here I woll ensuren the
Wyth nones that thou wolte do so
That I shall neuer fro the go
But be thyne owne swore brother
we woll medde vs eche in other
That no man be hennefurth to wrothe
Shall haue one two, but bothe
At ones, all betyde hys lyue
Come we amorowe or on eue
Be we clyde or syll yrowned
Thus sawe I false and sothe compowned
Togyder flye for o tydynge
Thus out at holes gonne wryngе
Euerye tydynge streyght to Fame
And she gan yeue eche hys name
After her dysposycion
And yeue hem eke duracion
Some to were and wane soone
As dothe the fayre whyte moone
And let hem gone, there myght I seen
Wynged wonders faste flyen
Twenty thousande in a route
As Eolus hem blewe aboute
And loude thys house in all tymes
was full of shrpinen and pylgrymes
wyth scryppes dlette full of leasynges
Entremelled wyth tidynges
And eke alone by hem selue

O many

O many thousande tymes twelue
Sawe I eke of these pardoners
Currours, and eke messangers
wyth bores crommed full of lyes
As euer vessell was wyth lyes
And as I aither fastest wente
Aboute, and dyd all myne entente
We for to playen and for to lere
And eke a tydynge for to here
That I had herde of some countre
That shall not nowe be tolde for me
For it no nede is redely
Folke can synge it bet then I
For all mote out late or rathe
All the sheues in the rathe
I herde a great noyse wythall
In a corner of the hall
There men of loue tydynges tolde
And I gan thyderwarde beholde
For I sawe rennynge euery wyght
As faste as that they haddon myght
And euerychc cryde, what thynge is that
And some sayd I not neuer what
And when they were all on an hepe
Tho behynde gonne vp lepe
And clamben vp on other faste
And vp the noyse on hyghen caste
And treden faste on others heles
And stampe as men done after eles
At the laste I sawe a man
whyche that I naught ne can
But he semed for to be
A man of great authorite
And therwythall I abrayde
Out of my slepe halfe afrayde
Remembrynge well what I had sene
And howe hye and ferre I had bene
In my goost, and had great wonder
Of that the god of thonder
Had let me knowen, and began to wryte
Lyke as ye haue herde me endyte
wherfore to studye and rede alwaye
I purpose to do daye by daye
Thus in dreamynge and in game
Endeth thys lytell boke of Fame

Here folowth the Testament of Loue.

The testament of loue.

Many men there bene, that wyth eeres openly spread, so moche swalowen the deliciousnesse of testes and of tyme, by queynte knyttynge colours, that of the goodnesse or of the badnesse of the sentence take they lytell hede or els none. Sothelye dull wytte & a thoughtfull soule, so sore haue myned & grafted in my spirites, that suche craste of endytynge woll not ben of myne acquayntaunce. And for rude wordes & boystous peren the herte of the hereer to the inest poynte and planten there the sentence of thynges, so that wyth lytell helpe it is able to spryngе.

¶ This boke that nothynge hath of the greate floode of wyt ne of semelych colours, is dolven wyth rude wordes and boystous, and so drawe togyther to maken the eatchers herof ben the more redy to hent sentence.

Some men there ben that peynten wyth colours eyche, and some wyth bers, as wyth red ynke, and some wyth coles and chalke: & yet is there good matere to the lewde people of thilke chalky purtreiture, as hem thinketh for the tyme, and afterwarde the syght of the better colours yeuen to hem more joy for the fyrst lewdnesse. So sothly this lewde cloudye occupacion is not to prayse, but by the lewde: for comenly lewde, lewdnesse comendeth. Eke it shal yeue sight that other precious thinges shalbe the more in reuerence. In latyn and frenche hath many soueraine wyttes had gret delyte to endyte, and haue many noble thynges fulfylde, but certes there ben some ỳ speken theyr poysy mater in frenche, of whyche speche the frenche men haue as good a fantasye as we haue in hearyng of frenche mennes englysche. And many termes there ben in englysche, whych vneth we englyshmen connen declare the knowlegynge: Howe shulde then a frenche man borne, such termes conne vnpere in hys mater, but as the iaye chatereth englysche. Eyght so truly the vnderstandynge of englyshmen woll not stretche to the propre termes in frenche, what so euer we bosten of straunge langage. Let then clerkes endyten in latyn, for they haue the propertye of scyence And the knowynge in that faculty: and lette frenchmen in theyr frenche also endyte theyr queynt termes, for it is kyndly to theyr mouthes, and let vs shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge. And although thys boke be lytel thanke wor thy for the lewdnesse in trauayle, yet such wry tynges ereuen men to thynke thynges ỳ bene necessarie: for euery mã therby maye se by a perpetual myrr our sene the vyces or vertues of other, in which thynge lyghtly may be cõceyued to eschewe perylls, and necessaries to catche, after as auentures haue fallen to other people or persons. Certes ỳ soueraynst thing of beyng and moste creature reasonable, haue or els shulde haue ful appetyte to theyr perfection: vnreasonable beestes mowen not, syth reason hath in hem no werkynge. Then reasonable that wol not, is comparysoned to vnreasonable and made lyke hem. For sothe the moste soueraine and fynall perfection of mã is in knowynge of a soth, wythouten any entent bytreyuable, and in loue of one very god, that is inchaungeable, that is to knowe and loue hys creatour. ¶ Howe principally the meane to bryngе in knowlegynge and louynge hys creatour, is the consyderacion of thinges made by the creatour wherthrough he thynke thynges that bene made vnderstandynge here to our wyttes, arne the diuyne pryuytees of god made to vs sightful & knowing in our cõtemplacion & vnderstandyng. Thefe thinges then forsoth moch byrngen vs to ỳ ful knowlegynge sothe, and to the parfyte loue of the maker of heauenly thynges. Lo Dauid sayeth: thou hast delyted me in makynge, as who sayeth, to haue delite in ỳ tune how god hath lent me in cõsyderacion of thy makynge. wherof Aristotle in the boke de Animalibus sayeth to naturel philosophers: It is a great irkynge in loue of knowynge theyr creatour and also in knowynge of causes in kyndelye thynges consydred. For sothe the formes of kyndly thynges & ỳ shap, a great kyndly loue mẽ shulde haue to the werkman ỳ hem made The craste of a werkman is shewed in the werke. Therefore truly the philosophers with a lyuely studye many noble thynges, ryghte precious and worthy to memory wryten, &

by a great swet and trauayle to vs lefte of
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the treasure, al the rychesse, al þ vayngloxy þ
the passed Emperours, princes, or kynges
hadden. Therfore þ names of hem in þ boke
of perpetual memoxy in vertue & peace arne
writte, and in the contrary, that is to sayne
in stire þ foule pytte of helle arne thilke pres-
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thys boke shall be of loue, and the pryme cau
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meate for children of trouth, and as they me
betyden whẽ I pylgrimaged out of my kyth
in wynter, whyen the wether out of mea-
sure was boystous, & the wylde wynde
Boreas as hys kynde asketh wyth
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The testament of loue.

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Some men there ben that peynten wyth colours ryche, and some wyth vers, as wyth redynke, and some wyth coles and chalke: & yet is there good matere to the leude people of thilke chalky purtreiture, as hem thinketh for the tyme, and afterwarde the syght of the better colours yeuen to hem more ioy for the fyrst leudnesse. So sothly thys leude cloudye occupacion is not to prayse, but by the leude: for comenly leude, leudnesse cõmendeth. Take it that yeue sight that other precious thinges shalbe the more in reuerence. In latyn and frenche hath many soueraine wyttes had gret delyte to endyte, and haue many noble thynges fulfylde, but certes there ben some þ speken theyr poesy matter in frenche, of whyche speche the frenche men haue as good a fantasye as we haue in hearyng of frenche mennes englyshe. And many termes there ben in englyshe, whych vneth we englyshmen connen declare the knowlegynge: Howe shulde then a frenche man borne, such termes conne numpere in hys matter, but as the taye chatereth englyshe. Right so truly the vnderstandynge of englyshmen woll not stretche to the pryuy termes in frenche, what so euer we deffen of straunge langage. Let then clerkes endyten in latyn, for they haue the propertye of scýence And the knowynge in that faculteye: and lette frenchmen in theyr frenche also endyte theyr queynt termes, for it is kyndly to theyr mouthes, And let vs shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge. And although thys boke be lytel thanke woorthy for the leudnesse in trauayle, yet such wayfynges eraten men to thylke thynges þ bene necessarie: for euery mã thereby maye as by a perpetual myrr our sene the vyces or vertues of other, in which thynge lyghtly may be cõceyued to eschewe perils, and necessaries to catche, after as auentures haue fallen to other people or persons. Certes þ souerayntst thing of desyre and moste creature reasonable, haue or els shulde haue ful appetyte to theyr perfection: vnreasonable beestes mowen not, syth reason hath in hem no werkynge. Then reasonable that wol not, is comparysoned to vnreasonable, and made lyke hem. Forsothe the moste sourrayne and fynall perfection of mã is in knowynge of a soth, wythouten any entent dyscryuable, and in loue of one very god, that is inchaungeable, that is to knowe and loue hys creatour. ¶ Nowe principally the meane to bryngе in knowlegynge and louynge hys creatour, is the consyderacion of thinges made by the creatour wherthrough he thylke thynges that bene made vnderstandynge here to our wyttes, arne the vnsene prayvytees of god made to vs sightful & knowing, in our contemplacion & vnderstandyng. Thefe thanges then forsoth moch bryngen vs to þ ful knowlegynge sothe, and to the parfyte loue of the maker of heauenly thynges. Lo Dauid sayeth: thou haste delyted me in makynge, as who sayeth, to haue delite in þ tune how god hath lent me in cõsyderacion of thy makynge. wherof Aristotle in the boke de Animalibus sayeth to naturel philosophers: It is a great lykynge in loue of knowynge theyr creatour and also in knowynge of causes in kyndelye thynges consydred. Forsothe the formes of kyndly thynges & þ shap a great kyndly loue mé shulde haue to the werkman þ hem made The crafte of a werkman is shewed in the werke. Therefore truly the philosophers with a lyuely studye many noble thynges, ryght precious and worthy to memoyr wryten, &

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But now thou reder, who is thylke þ wyl
not in scorne laughe, to here a dwerfe or els
halfe a man, say he wyll rende out the swerd
of Hercules handes, & also he shulde set Her
cules gades a myle yet ferther, and ouer that
he had power of strength to pul vp the spere,
that Alysander þ noble myght neuer wegge.

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here after folowyth the fyrst
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ALas Fortune alas, I that somtyme in delycious houres was wont to enioy blysful stoundes, am nowe dryue by vnhappy heuynes to bewayle my sondry yuels in tene. Trewlye I leaue, in myne herte is wryte of perdurable letters al the entencions of lamentacion that now ben purempned, for any maner dysease outwarde in sobbynge maner, sheweth sorowfull perynge from wythin. Thus from my comforte I gynne to spylle, syth she that shulde me solace, is ferre fro my presence. Certes her absence is to me an hell, my steruyng deth thus in wo it myneth, ỳ endeleſſe care is throughe out myne herte clęched, blysse of my ioye, that ofte my murthed is turned into galle, to thynke on thynge that maye not at my wyll in ames me hent. Wyth is chaunged into tene, when swynke is there continually, that reste was wonte to sojourne and haue dwellynge place. Thus wytleſſe thoughtfull, syghtleſſe lokinge, I endure my penaunce in this derke prysone, cayt'ued fro frendshyp and acquaintaunce, and forsaken of all ỳ any worde dare sprke. Straunge hath by waye of instrucyon made hys home, there me shuld be, yf reason were herde as he shulde. Neuerthelater yet hertely lady precious Margarit, haue mynd on thy seruaunt, and thynke on hys dysease howe lyghtles he lyueth, sythe the beames brénende in loue of thyne eyen arne so be wét that worldes and cloudes atwene vs tweye woll not suffre my thoughtes of hem to be enlumyned. Thynke that one vertue of a Margarite precious is amonges many other the sorowful to cófort, yet well of that me sorowfull to comforte is my luste to haue nought els at thys tyme, dede ne dethe, ne no maner trauayle hath no power myne herte so moche to fade, as shulde to here of a twynckelynge in your dysease. Ah, god forbyde that, but yet lette me dey, lette me sterue wythouten any measure of penaunce, rather then myne herte by thynkynge comforte in ought were dyseased. What maye my seruyce aueyle in absence of her, that my seruyce shuld accepte, is thys not endeleſſe sorowe to thynke. Yes, yes god wote, myne hert breaketh nygh a sonder howe shulde the grounde wythout kyndly noriture bryngen forth any frutes. how shulde a shyppe withouten a sterne in the greate see be gouerned. Howe shulde I withouten my blysse, my herte, my desyre, my ioye, my goodnesse, endure in thys contrarious prison, that thynke euery houre in ỳ day an hudred wynter. Wel may nowe Eue sayne to me Adam, in sorowe fallen from welth, dryue art thou out of paradyse, wyth sweate thy sustenaunce to be swynke. Depe in thys pynynge pytte with wo I lygge ystocked, with chaynes lynked of care & of tene. It is so hye from thens I lye and ỳ cómune erth, there ne is cable in no lande maked, that myght stretche to me to drawe me in to blysse, ne steyers to stey on is none, so that wythout recouer endleſſe here to endure I wote wel I purueyd. O, where arte thou nowe frendshyp, that somtyme with laughande chere, madest both face and countenaunce to me warde. truely now art thou went out of towne, but euer me thynketh he weareth hys old clothes, & that ỳ soule in the whych the lyke of frendshyppe was in, is drawen out from hys other spirites. Nowe then farewell frendshyp, and farewel felawes me thynketh ye al han taken your leaue: no force of you all at ones. But lady of loue ye wote what I mene, yet thynke on thy seruaunt, that for thy loue spylleth, all thynges haue I forsake to folowen thyne hestes: rewarde me yb a thought, though ye do nought els. Remembraunce of loue lyeth so sore vnder my breste, that other thought cometh not in my mynde but gladneſſe to thynke on youre goodneſſe & youre merye chere, frendes and sorowe to thynke on youre wyche and your daunger, from whych Chryst me saue. Wyy great loue it is to haue in meditacion the bountes, the vertues. The nobley in yon pryntes: sorowe and hell comen at ones, to suppose that I be beyned: thus wyth care, sorowe, and tene am I shapte myne ende yb dethe to make. Now good goodlye thynke on thys. O wretched foole that I am fallen into so lowe, the heate of my brényng tene hath me al defased: howe shulde ye lady sette pryse on so foule fylthe? Wy conynge is thynne, my wytte is exiled, lyke to a foole naturel am I comparysoned. Trewly lady but your merey the more were I wote well al my labour were in vdel: your merey then passeth ryght. God graunt that

proposicion

propoſycyon to be verifyed in me, ſo that by truſte of good hope, I mowe come to the haven of eaſe, and ſythe it is impoſſyble, the colours of your qualyties to chaunge: & forſoth I wote well wemme ne ſpotte maye not abyde, there ſo noble vertue habouideth, ſo that the defaſynge to you is verely ymagynable, as countenaunce of goodneſſe wyth encreaſynge vertue, is ſo in you knytte to abyde by neceſſary maner, yet yf the eyuers myght fal, whych is ayenſt kynde, I wol wel myn hert ne ſhulde therfore naught flytte by the leſte poynt of gemetrye, ſo ſadlye is it fonded, that away from your ſeruyce in loue maye he not departe. O loue, when ſhall I ben pleaſed? O charite, when ſhall I ben eaſed? O good goodly, when ſhall the dyce turne? O full of vertue do the chaunce of comforte vpwarde to fal. O loue, when wolt thou thynke on thy ſeruaunt? I can nomore but here out caſte of al welfare, abyde the daye of my dethe, or els to ſe the ſyght that myght all my wellyng ſorowes voyde, and of the floode make an ebbe. Theſe dyſeaſes mowen wel by dureſſe of ſorowe, make my lyfe to vnbodye, and ſo for to dye: but certes ye ladye in a full perfection of loue ben ſo knytte wyth my ſoule, that dethe may not thylke knotte vnbynde ne departe, ſo that ye and my ſoule togethet is endeleſſe, in blyſſe ſhulde dwel, and there ſhal my ſoule at the full ben eaſed, that he may haue your preſence to ſhewe thentet of his deſyres: Ah dere god, that ſhall be a great ioye. Nowe erthely goddeſſe take regarde of thy ſeruaũt, though I be feble, for thou arte wont to prayſe them better, that wold conne ſerue in loue, al be he full mener then kynges or princes, that woll not haue that vertue in mynde. Nowe precious Margaryte, that wyth thy noble vertue haſte drawen me into loue fyrſt, me wenyng therof to haue blyſſe, as galle and aloes are ſo moch ſpronge, that ſauour of ſwetneſſe may I not atraſte. Alas that your benigne eyen, in whych that mercy ſemeth to haue al hys noũriture, nyll by no waye tourne the clereneſſe of mercy to me wardes. Alas that youre brennande vertues, ſhynynge amonges all folke, and enluminynge all other people by habundance of encreaſing, ſhewen to me but ſmok & no lyght. Theſe thynges to thinke in myne hert maketh euery day weping in myne eyen to renne. Theſe lyggen on my backe ſo ſore, that importable burthen me ſemeth on my backe to be charged, it maketh me backwarde to meue, when my ſteppes by comune courſe euen forth pretende: Theſe thynges alſo on ryghtſyde & lyfte, haue me ſo enuolued wyth care, that wãhope of helpe is throught out me ronne, trewly and leue that graceleſſe is my fortune, whych that euer ſheweth it mewardes by a cloudy dyſeaſe, already to make ſtormes of tene, and the dirkſull ſyde halte ſtyl awayward, & woll it not ſuffre to me wardes to turne: nofoyer, yet wol I not ben coquered

O, alas that your nobley ſo moch amonge all other creatures cõmended by folowynge ſtreme by al maner vertues, but ther ben wõderful, I not which that let the flode to come into my ſoule, wherfore purely mated wyth ſorowe thorough fought, my ſelfe I crye on your goodneſſe to haue pyte on thys caytyfe, that in the ineſt degre of ſorowe and dyſeaſe is left, & wythout your goodly wyll frõ any helpe and recouery. Theſe ſorowes mave I not ſuſtene, but yf my ſorowe ſhulde be tolde and to you wardes ſhewed, although moche ſpace is betwene vs twaine, yet me thynketh that by ſuche ſolemynge wordes, my dyſeaſe grenneth ebbe. Trewly me thynketh that the ſowne of my lamentacions weping is right now flowe into your preſence, & there cryeth after mercy & grace, to whyche thyng me ſemeth the lyſt none anſwere to yeue, but with a deynous chere ye cõmaunden it to auoyde, but god forbyd that any worde ſhulde of you ſpringe to haue ſo lyte routh. Parde pyte & mercy in euery Margarite is cloſed by kynde amõges many other vertues, by qualites of comforte, but comfort is to me ryght naught worth, wythouten mercy & pyte of you alone whych thynges haſtely god me graut for his mercye.



Therynge theſe thanges and many other wythout tyme or moment of reſt me ſemed for anguyſhe of dyſeaſe, that altogether I was rauſhed, I can not tell howe, but holy all my paſſyons & felynges weren loſte, as it ſemed for the tyme, and ſodaynly a maner of drede lyght in me all at ones, nought ſuch feare as folke haue of an enemy that were myghty, & wolde hem greue or done hem dyſeaſe: for I trowe thys is wel knowe to many perſones

that

that otherwhyle yf a man be in hys souerayn-
nes presence, a maner of ferdnesse crepeth in
hys herte, not for harme, but of goodly subie-
ction namely as men reden that aungels ben
aferde of our sauyour in heuen. And pardy
there ne is, ne may no passyó of dísease be, but
it is to meane that angels ben adrade, not by
frendes of drede, sythé they ben perfytly bys-
sed, as affection of wóderfulnesse & by seruice
of obedience, such ferde also han these louers
in presence of theyr loues, & subiectes afore
theyr soueraynes: Right so wyth ferdenesse
myne herte was caught. And I sodaynly a-
stonyed, there entred into the place there I
was lodged a ladye, the semelyest and mooste
goodly to my syght, that euer to forne apered
to any creature, and truly in the blusshyng of
her loke, she yaue gladnesse and comforte so-
daynlye to all my wyttes, and ryghte so she
dothe to euery wyght that cometh in her pre
sence. And for she was so goodlye (as me
thought) myne herte beganne somdele to be
enbolded, and werte a lytel hardy to speake,
but yet wyth a quakynge voyce, as I durste,
I salued her, and enquyred what she was,
and why she so worthy to syghte, dayned to
entre in to so foule a dongeon, and namelye a
prysón, wythout leaue of my keepers. For cer
tes although the vertue of dedes of mercye
stretcheth to vysyten the poore prisoners, and
hem after that facultyes ben had to comfort,
me semed that I was so ferre falle into my-
serye and wretched hyd captyuitie, that me
shulde no precious thynge nyghe: and also
that for thy sorowe euery wyght shulde ben
heauy, and wyshe my recouery. But when
thys lady had somdele apercyued, as wel by
my wordes as by my chere, what thought be
fyed me within, wyth a good womanly cou-
tenaunce she sayd these wordes.

O my nory, wenyst thou that my maner
be, to forvet my frendes or my seruauntes-
nave (quod she) it is my full entente to vy-
syte and comforte al my frendshyppes and a-
lyes, as well in tyme of perturbation, as of
mooste prosperyte of blysse, in me shall vn-
kyndnesse neuer be founden. And also sythen
I haue so fewe especyal trewe nowe in these
dayes, wherfore I maye well at more leysar
come to hem that me deserue, and yf my co-
mynge maye in any thynge auayle, wete wel
I woll come often.

Now good lady (quod I) that art so fayre
our to loke, reuynge honny by thy wordes,
blysse of paradyse arne thy lokynges, ioy and
comforte are thy mouynges. What is thy
name? how is it that in you is so mokel wer-
kynge vertues enpyght, as me semeth, and in
none other creature, that euer sawe I wyth
myne eyen? Why dysciple (q she) me wódreth
of thy wordes and on the, þ for a lytel dísease
haste forveten my name: wostu not well
that I am Loue, that first the brought to thy
seruyce? O good lady (quod I) is thys wor-
shyp to the or to thyne excellence for to come
into so foule a place? Parde somtyme tho I
was in prosperite, and wyth forevne goodes
enuolued, I had mokel to done to drawe the
to myne hostel, & yet many werynges thou
madest er thou lyste fullye to grannt, thyne
home to make at my dwellyng place: & nowe
thou comest goodly by thyne owne vyse, to
comforte me wyth wordes, and so there tho-
roughe I gynne remembre on passed glad-
nesse. Trewly ladye I ne wotte whether I
shal say welcome or none, sythen thy comyng
wol as moch do me tene and sorowe, as glad
nesse and myrthe: se why. For that me com-
forteth to thinke on passed gladnesse, that me
anoyeth efte to be in dovnge. Thus thy co-
mynge bothe gladdeth and teneth, and that
is cause of moche sorowe: Lo ladye, howe
then I am comforted by your commyng, and
with that I gan in teeres to dystylle, and ten
derlye wepe. Nowe certes (quod loue) I se
well (and that me ouerthynketh) that wytte
in the fayleth, and arte in poynte to dote.
Trewly (quod I) that haue ye maked, and
that euer woll I rue. Wotest thou nat wel
(quod she) that euery shepeherde ought by re
son to seke hys sperkelande shepe that arne
ronne in to wylderneste, amonge bushes and
perils, and hem to theyr pasture aven bringe
and take on hem puny besy cure of kepynge:
and tho the vncomynge shepe scattreth wolde
ben loste, rennyng to wylderneste, and to de-
sertes drawe, or els wolden put hem selfe to
the swalowynge wolfe, yet shal the shepherd
by busynesse and trauayle so put hym forth,
that he shall nat let hem be loste by no wayes.
A good shepeherd putteth rather hys lyfe to
ben loste for hys shepe. But for thou shalte
not wene me beynge of werse condicyon, tra
ly for euerych of my folke, and for all tho that

to me

to me warde be knyt in any condicion, I wil rather dye than suffre hem through erroure to ben spylt. For me lyst, and it me lyketh, of all myne a shepherdesse to be cleped. wottest thou not well I fayled neuer wyght, but he me refused, and wolde negligently go with vnkyndnesse: and yet parde haue I many such holp and releued, and they haue oft me begyled, but euer at the ende it discendeth in theyr owne neckes. Hast thou not radde how kynde I was to Paris, Priamus son of Troye: How Jason me falsed for all hys false behest: how Sefars sonke, I lett it for no tene tyll he was croned in my bylle, for his seruyce. what q she most of all maked I not a louedaye betwene God and man kynde, and chese a mayde to be nompere, to put the quarell at ende: Lo how I haue trauayled to haue thanke on all sydes, and yet lyst me not to rest, & I myght fynde on who I shulde werche, but truly myne owne dysciple, because I haue the founde at all assayes in thy wyll to ben readye, nye hestes to haue folowed and hast ben true to that margarete peerle, that ones I the shewed, and she alway aywarde hath made but daungerous cheare, I am come in propre person to put the out of errours and make the glad by wayes of reason, so that sorowe ne dysease shall nomore hereafter the annoye. wherethrough I hope thou shalte lyghtly come to the grace, that thou longe hast desyred of thilke iewel. Hast thou not herde many ensamples howe I haue comforted and releued the scholers of my lore: who hathe worthyed kynges in the felde: who hath honoured ladyes in boure by a perpetual myrroure of theyr trouthe in my seruyce: who hath caused worthye folke to voyde vyce & shame: who hath holde cytees and realmes in prosperite: yf the lyste cleape ayen thyne olde remembraunce, thou coudest euery poynt of this declare in especyall, and sayr that I thy maystresse haue be cause, causyng these thynges and many mo other. Nowe ywys madame quod I al these thinges I know well my selfe, and that thyne excellence passeth the vnderstandynge of vs beestes, and that nomans wyt erthly may comprehende thy vertues. well than q she for I se the mysease and sorow, I wote wel thou art one of myne nowes, I maye not suffre the so to make sorowe thyne owne selfe to shende: but I my selfe come to be thy fere, thyne heauye charge to make to seme the lesse, for woo is hym that is alone: And to the sory to be moned by a sorowfull wyght it is greate gladnesse. Right so with my sycke frendes I am sycke, and with sorye, I can not els but sorowe make, tyll whan I haue hem releued in suche wyse that gladnesse in a maner of countreparsyng shal restore as mokel in ioy as the passed heuynesse before dyd in tene. And also q she whan anye of my seruauntes ben alone in solitary place, I haue yet euer busyed me to be with hem, in comfort of theyr hertes, and taught hem to make songes of playnte and of blysse, and to endyten letters of rethorycke in queynt vnderstandynges, & to bethynke hem in what wyse they myght best theyr ladyes in good seruice plese and also to lerne maner in countenaunce, in wordes & in bearynge, and to ben meke and lowlye to euery wyght, his name & fame to encrease, and to yeue great yeftes and large that his renome may sprynge: but the ther of haue I refused for thy lolle and thy great costages, wherthrough thou art nedy. nothynge to me vnknowen, but I hope to god somtyme it shall ben amended as thus as I sayde. In norture haue I taught myne, and in curtesie made hem expert theyr ladyes hertes to wyn, and yf any wolde envious or proude or be enuious or of other ches acquayntaunce, hastelyche haue I fro voyded out of my schole: for all vyces truly I hate: vertues and worthynesse in all my power I auaunce. Ah worthye creature q I and by iuste cause the name of goddesse dignely ye mowe beare: In the lyth y grace through which any creature in this worlde hath any goodnesse, truly all maner of blysse and preeyousnesse in vertue out of the sprungen and wellen, as brokes and ryuers proceden from theyr sprynges, and lyke as all waters by kynde drawen to the see, so all kyndly thynges thresten by full appetyte of desyre to draw after thy steppes, and to thy presence approche, as to theyr kyndely perfectio: How dare than beestes in this world ought forfayte ayenste thy deuyne purueyaunce. Also ladye ye knowen all the pryure thoughtes, in hertes no counsayle may ben hydde from your knowynge.

wherfore I wot well lady that ye knowe youre selfe that I in my conscyence am, and haue ben wyllyng to your seruyce, al coulde I neuer do as I shulde, yet forsothe fayned I neuer to loue otherwise thā was in myne herte: and yf I coulde haue made cheare to one, and ythought an other, as many other done all daye afore myne eyen, I trowe it wolde not me haue vayled. Certes quod she haddest thou so done, I wold not now haue the here vysited. Ye wete wel lady eke (quod I) that I haue not played racket, nettyll in, docke out, and with the wethercock waued and truly there ye me sette, by accorde of my conscience, I wolde not flye, tyll ye and reason by aperte strength made myne herte to tourne. In good fayethe (quod she) I haue knowe the euel of tho condicions, and sythē thou woldest (in as moche as in the was) a made me pryuy of thy counsayle, and iuge of thy conscience, though I forsoke it in tho dayes, tyl I sawe better my tyme. wold ne-uer god that I shulde now fayle, but euer I wyll be ready wytnessynge thy soth in what place that euer I shall, ayenste all tho that wol the contrary susteyne: And for as moch as to me is nought vnknowen ne hydde of thy pryuy hert, but al hast thou tho thinges made to me open at the full, that hath caused my commynge into this prison to voyde the webbes of thyne eyen, to make the clerly to se the errours thou hast bene in, and by cause that men bene of dyuers condicyons, some ad-dadde to fave a soth, and some for a sothe anon readye to fyght, and also that I maye not my selfe bene in place to withsaye thylke men that of the speaken, otherwyse than the sothe, I woll and I charge the in vertue of obedyence, that thou to me owest, to wryten my wordes, and set hem in wy-tynges that they mowe as my wytnessyng ben noted amonge the people. For bookes wryttē neyther dreden ne shame, ne stryue conne, but only shewen the entent of the wri-ter, and yeue remembraunce to the hearer: and yf anye woll in thy presence saye anye thynge to tho wryters, loke boldlye, truste on Pats to answer at the full. For certes I shall hym enfourme of all the trouthe in thy loue, with thy conscience, so that of his help thou shalt not barye at thy nede.

I trowe the strongeste and the best that may be founde, woll not transuers thy wor-des, whereof than woldest thou drede.



Keatlye was I tho gladed of these wor-des, and as whosaith weren somdele lyght in hert both for the au-ctoritie of wytnesse + also for syckernesse of helpe of the forsayd be-hest, and sayd. Trulye ladye now am I well gladded throughō-fort of your wordes: be it now lykynge vnto your nobleye to shewe whiche folke defame your seruauntes, syth your seruyce ought a-bone all other thynges to bene commended. Yet (quod she) I se well thy soule is not all out of the amased cloude, the were better to here thynge þ the myght lyght out of thyne heuy charge, and after knowynge of thyne owne helpe, than to flyt swete wordes + suche reasons to here: for in a thought full soule (and namelye suche one as thou arte) woll not yet suche thynges synken. Come of therfore and let me sene thyne heuye charge, that I maye the lyghtlyer for thy comforte purueye.

Now certes ladye (quod I) the moost cō-fort I myght haue, were bitterly to wete me be sure in herte of that Margaryte, I serue and so I thynke to done wyth all myghtes whyle my lyfe dureth. Tha (quod she) may-est thou thereafter, in suche wyse that myn displeasaunce ne entre. In good fayth (quod I) there shall no myspleasaunce be caused through trespalle on my syde. And I do the to wete (quod she) I set neuer yet perso to serue in no place (but yf he caused the contrary in defaultes and trespalles) that he ne spende of hys seruyce. Myne owne earthlye ladye (quod I tho) and yet remembre to your wor-thynesse how longe sythen by many reuol-uynge of yeres, in tyme whan October hys leue gynneth take, and Nouembre sheweth him to sight, wha bernes ben full of goodes as is the nut on enery halke, and than good lande tyllers gynne shape for the erth, with great trauayle to bryng forth more corne to mannes sustenaunce, ayenst the nexte yeres folowynge. In such tyme of plentie, he that hath an houne, and is wyse, lyst not to wan-der

der maruayles to seche, but he be constrayned or excited: oft the loth thynge is done by exstacyon of other mennes opinion, which wolden fayne haue myne abydynge, take in hert of lust, to trauayle and se the wyndyng of the erth in that tyme of wynter, by woodes that large stretes werne in, by smal pathes that swyne and hoggys haden made, as lanes with ladles they maste to seche, I walked thynkynge aloone a wonder greate whyle, and the greate beestes that the wood haunten and adournth all maner forestes, and heerdes gone to wylde: than er I was ware I neyghed to a see banke, and for ferde of the beestes thypecraft I eyed: for lady I trowe ye were well your selfe nothynge is werse than the beestes that shulden be tame yf they catche her wyldenesse, and gyn ayen ware ramage: thus forsothe was I aferde, and to shyppe me hyed. Than were there ynowe to latch myne handes and drawe me to shyppe, of which many I knewe well the names. Syght was the fyrst, lust was another, thought was the thyrde, and wyll eke was there a mayster these broughten me vp in boorde of this shyppe of trauayle. So whan the sayle was spread, and this shyppe gan to mone, the wynde and water gan for to tryse, and ouerthwartly to turne ye welken the wawes semeden as they kyst togyther, but often vnder colour of kyssyng is mokell olde hate priuely closed and kept. The storm so straungely and in deuouryng maner gan so fast vs assayle, that I supposed the date of my deth shulde haue made there his gynnyng, now vp now downe, nowe vnder the wawe and nowe abouen was my shyppe a great whyle. And so by mokel durelle of wethers and of stormes, and with greate auowynge pylgremages I was dryuen to an yle, where vtterly I wende fryste to haue be reste wed, but truly at the fyrst gynnynge, it semed me so perylous the hauen to catche, that but thorowe grace I hadde bene comforted, of lyfe I was full dispayred. Truly, ladye yf ye be remembred aryght of all maner thynges, your selfe came hastely to sene as see drawen, and to weten what we weren but fryste ye were deynous of cheare, after whyche ye goone better alyght, and euer as me thought ye lyued in greate drede of disease, it semed so by your chere.

And whan I was certifyed of your name the lenger I looked in you, the more I you goodly dradde, and euer myne herte on you opened the more, and so in a lytle tyme my shyppe was out of mynde. But ladye as ye me lad, I was ware both of beestes and of fysshes a great nombre throngynge togyther: among which a muskell in a blewe shel had enclosed a Margaryte perle, the moost precyous and best that euer tofore came in my syght, and ye tolden youre selfe that yike iewell in his kynde was so good and so vertuous, that her better shulde I neuer fynde, all sought I therafter to the worldes ende, and wyth that I helde my peace a greate whyle: and euer sythe I haue me bethought on the man that sought the precious Margarytes, and whan he had founden one to his lykyng, he solde all his good to bye that iewell: yow thought I, yet so I thynke, now haue I founden the iewelle that myne hert desyreth, wherto shulde I seche ferther truly now well I thynke, and on this Margaryte I set me for euer. Nowe than alla sythen I wyst well it was your wyl that I shoulde to suche a seruyce me take, and so to desyre that thynge of whiche I neuer haue blysse, there lyeth none, but he hath disease your myght than that brought me to suche seruyce, that to me is cause of sorowe and of sore, I wonder of your worde that ye sayne to bryngen men into sore, and parde ye wet well that defaulte ne trespasse mave not reasonably bene put to me wardes, as farre as my conscience knoweth. But of my disease me lyste nowe a whyle to speake, and to enforme you in what maner of blysse ye haue me thronge. For truly I wene that al gladnesse, all sore, and all myrth is beshet vnder locke, and the keye throwen in suche place ye it may not be founde, my brennyng wo hath altred all my hewe, whan I shoulde slepe, I walowe and I thynke, and me disporte. Thus combred, I seme that all folke had me mased. Also ladye myne, desyre hath longe dured, some spekynge to haue, or els at yleest haue ben enuoyed with syght: and for wanting of these thinges, my mouth wolde and he durst pleyne right sore, sythen euyls for my goodnesse arne manyfolde to me yolden. I wonder lady truly, saue euermore your reuerence, how ye mowe for shame such thinges suffre

on youre seruaunte to be so multyplyed: wherfore kneyng with a lowe hert I praye you to rue on this caytyfe, that of nothynge now may serue. Good ladye yf ye lyst nowe your helpe to me shewe, that am of your pryuyest seruauntes at al assayes in this tyme, and vnder your wynges of protection. No helpe to me wardes is shapen, how shal thā straungers in any wyse after succour loke, whan I that am so pryuy, yet of helpe I do fayle. Further may I not, but thus in this prison abyde: what bondes and chaynes me holden, lady ye se wel your selfe. A tenyaūt forynged hath not halfe the care. But thus syghyng and sobynge I wayle here alone, and nere it for cōfort of your presence, ryght here wold I sterue. And yet al ytle am I gladed, yt so goodly suche grace and mone happe haue I hent, gracyously to fynde the precyous Margarete, that (all other lefte) meme shulde bye, yf they shulde therfore sel all her substaunce. wo is me that so manye let games and purpose brekers bene maked wayters suche prysoners as I am, euermore to ouerloke and to hyndre, and for suche letto res it is harde any suche tewell to wyn. Is this lady an honour to thy deyte: me thynketh by ryght, suche people shoulde haue no maystry, ne ben ouerlokers ouer none of thy seruauntes. Truly were it leful vnto you, to all the goddes welde I playne, that ye rule youre deuyne purueyaunce amonges youre seruauntes nothyng as ye shulde. Also lady my moeble is insufysaunt to countreuayle the prece of this tewell, or els to make thes chaunge: eke no wyght is worthy suche perles to weare, but kynges or princes, or elles theyr peres: this tewel for bertue wolde adorne & make fayre al a realme. the noblesse of bertue is so moche that her goodnesse ouer all is comended. who is it yt wold not wayle but he myght suche rychesse haue at his wyl the bertue therof out of this prison may me delyuer, & nought els. And yf I be not there throw holpen, I se my selfe without recouery: Althoughe I myght hence voyde, yet wolde I not, I wold abyde the day that destenye hath me ordained, which I suppose is without amendement, so sore is myne herte bounden, that I may thynken none other.

Thus strayte (lady) hath sr Daunger laced me in stockes, I feue it be not your wyl: and for I se you taken so lytle hede, as me thynketh, & woll not maken by your myght the bertue in mercy of that Margaret on me for to stretch so as ye mow wel, in case that you lyst: my blysse and my myrth are fryde, sykenesse and sorowe ben alway redy, yt cope of tene is wounde about all my bodye, that stondyng is me best, wherby may I lygge for pure myseasy sorowe, and yet all this is lytel ynough to be the ernest sauer, in forward of this bargayne for treble solde, so mockell must I suffre, er tyme come of myne ease. For he is worthy no weith, that may no woe suffre. And certes I am heuye to thynke on these thynges, but who shall yeue me water ynough to drynke, lest myne eyen drye for rēnynge streames of teares. who shall wayle with me myne owne happy heuynesse. who shall counsayle me nowe in my lykyng tene, and in my goodly harse. I not. For euer the more I brenne, the more I couete, the more that I sorowe, the more thrust I in gladnes who shal than yeue me a contrarious drynk to stanch the thrist of my blysful bytternes. Lo thus I brenne and I drenche, I shyuer and I swet, for this reuersed cure was neuer yet ordeyned salue, for soth all lyches ben bi comyng, saue the Margaryte aloone, anye suche remedye to purueye

And wt these wordes I braste out to wepe, that euery terect myne eyen for greatnesse semed they beren cure of a ball of myn yght, and that all the water had ben out run. Tha thought me, that loue gan a lytle to beauye for mysconfort of my chere, and gan softe & in easye maner speake, well aduysynge what she sayde. Comenly the wyse speaken easely and softe for manye skylles: One is, theyr wordes are the better beleued, and also in easye speakyng, auysement men maye catche, what to put forth, and what to holden in. And also the auctoritie of easye wordes is the more, and eke they yeuen thēmore vnderstandyng to other intention of the mater. Ryght so this lady easely and in a softe maner gan saye these wordes.

Wernayle (q she) great it is, that by no maner of semblaunt, as farre as I can espy thou lyste not to haue anye recoure, but euer thou

thou playnest and sorowest, and wayes of remedye for foolysh wylfulnesse the lyst not to seche: but enquyre of thy nert fredes that is thyne in wyt, and me that haue ben thy maystresse, and the recoure and fyne of thy disease, or of disease is gladnesse and Joye, with a ful vessel so heided, that it quencheth the seyng of the fyrst temes. But thou that were wonte not onely these thinges remembre in thyne herte, but also fooles thereof to enfourmen, in admullynge of theyr errours, and distroyng of theyr darke opinions, and in comforte of theyr scare thoughtes: nowe canst thou not beue comforte of thyne owne soul, in thynkyng of these thinges. O where hast thou ben so longe commensal, that hast so mykell eeten of the pottages of forgetfulnesse: and dronken so of ignorance, that the olde soukyng which thou hadest of me, arne a maystred and lorne fro all maner of knowynge. O this is a worthy parson to helpe other, that can not counsayle hym selfe. And with these wordes for pure shame I wore all reed.

And she than seyng me so astonyed by dyuers stoundes sodaynly (which thyng kynd hateth) gan delyciously me comforte wyth fayred wordes, puttyng me in ful hope that I shulde the Margarete getten, yf I folowed her heestes, and gan with a fayre cloth to wypen the teares that bregen on my chekes: and than sayde I in this wyse. Nowe well of wysdome and of all welth, without ten the may nothyng be lerned, thou beaxest the keyes of all pryuye thynges. In bayne trauayle men to catche any stedfastnesse, but yf ye lady fyrst the locke vnshet, ye lady learne vs the wayes and the by pathes to heauen: ye lady maken al the heuenly bodyes goodly and benigly to do her course, that gouernen vs beestes here on erth. Ye armen youre seruauntes ayenst all debates, with impercyable harneys, ye setten in her hertes insuperable bloud of hardynesse, ye leden hem to the parfyte good. Yet all thynge desyreth, ye werne no man of helpe that wele done youre lore, graunt me now a lytle of youre grace, al my sorowes to ceasse. Wyne owne seruaunte (quod she) truly thou syttest nye myne herte and thy bad chere gan sorely me greue: but a nonge thy playnyng wordes me thought thou allegest thynges to be letting of thyne helpyng, and thy grace to hyndre, whe throwe me thynketh that wanhoope is rope through thyne herte: God forbyd that nyse vnthryfty thought shulde come in thy mynd thy wyttes to trouble, sythen euery thing in comyng is contingente, wherefore make no more thy proposition by an impossyble. But nowe I praye the reherse me ayen tho thynges, that thy mistrust causen, and thilke thinges I thynke by reason to destroyen, and put full hope in thyne hert. what vnderstandest thou ther (quod she) by that thou saydest many lette games are thyne ouerlokers. And also by that, thy moeble is insuffysaunce, I not what thou therof meanest.

Truly (quod I) by the fyrste, I saye that langelers euermore arne speakynge rather of euyll than of good, for euery age of man rather enclyneth to wyckednesse, than anye goodnesse to auaunce. Also false wordes sprungen so wyde, by the stirryng of falle lynge tonges, that fame als swyftly flyeth to her eares, and sayeth many wycked tales, as soone shall falsenesse ben leued as trouthe, for all his great forthnesse. Nowe by your (quod I) me thynketh thylke iewel so precious, that to no suche wretch as I am, wold hertue therof extende, and also I am vnable in worldly loyes, any suche iewell to contreuayle. For suche people that worldly loyes han at her wyl, ben set at the highest degree, and moost in reuerence lene accepted, for false weenynge maketh felicitie therein to be supposed: but suche cayteyues as I am euermore ben hyndred. Certes (quod she) take good hede, and I shall by reason to the shewen, that all these thynges nowe not let thy purpose, by the leeste poynte that anye wyght coude pryche.

REmembrest not (quod she) ensample is one of the strogest maner as for to preue a mans purpose. Than if I now by ensample endiue the to any proposition, is it not proued by strength. Yes for soth (quod I) wel (quod she) taddest thou neuer how Paris of Troy and Helayne loued together, and yet had they not entrecommuned of speche. Also Iereyus therte Danehys doughter in a tour, for surete that no wight shulde of her haue no mastry in my seruyce,

and yet Jupiter by lygnes without anye
spech had all his purpose ayenst her fathers
wyll. And many suche mo haue ben knytte
in trouth, and yet spake they neuer togyder:
for that is a thynge enclosed vnder secret-
nesse of prluitie, why twe personnes entre-
medlen hertes after a syght. The power in
knowynge of suche thynges so preuen, shall
not all vtterlye be yeuen to you beestes, for
manye thynges in suche preeyous maters,
ben reserued to iudgement of deuine pursuy
aunce, for amonge lyuynge people, by mans
consyderation moune they not be determy-
ned. wherefore I saye all the enuye, all the
langlynge, that weiny people vpon my ser-
uauntes maken elle, is rather cause of es-
ployte than of any hyndrynge. why than q
I suffre ye suche wronge, and moune whan
ye lyst, lyghtlye all suche euyls abate, me se-
meth to you it is a greate vnworthyp. O q
I) holde nowe thy peace, I haue founden
to manye that han bene to me vnkynde, that
truly I wol suffre euery wyght in that wise
to haue disease, and who that contynueth to
the ende well and truly, hem woll I helpen,
and as for one of myne into blysse to wende
as Partial doing in Greee who was reco-
uered, by God not the strongest, but he that
rathest come and longest abode and contr-
nued in the iourneye, and spared not to tra-
uayle as longe as the play lest.

But thylke person that profred hym now
to my seruyce therin is a whyle, & anon boy-
deth and redy to an other, and so now one he
thynketh and now an other, and into water
entreth and anon respyreth, such one lik me
not into parfyte blysse of my seruyce bryngе
A tree ofte set in dyuers places woll not by
kynde endure to bryngе forth frutes. Loke
now I praye the, howe myne olde seruaun-
tes of tyme passed continued in her seruyce,
and folowe thou after theyr steppes, & than
myght thou not fayle, in case thou worch in
this wise. Certes, quod I, it is nothyng lich
this worlde to tyme passed, ele this countre
hath one maner, & an other countre hath an-
other. And so may not a mā alway put to his
eye the salue that he healed with his hele.
For this is soth, betwen two thynges lyche
oft dyuersitie is requyred. Now, q he) that
is soth, diuersitie of nacion, diuersitie of law
as was maked by manye reasons, for that
diuersitie cōmeth in by the contrarious ma-
lyce of wicked people ỹ han enuyous hertes
ayenst other. But truly my lawe to my ser-
uauntes euer hath ben in generall, whyche
maye not fayle, for tyght as mans lawes ỹ
is ordeyned by many determinacious, may
not be know for good or bad, tyl assay of the
people han proued it, and to what end it dra
weth, and than it shewth the necessitie ther
of, or els the impossibilitie. Right so ỹ lawe
of my seruauntes so wel hath ben proued in
generall, that hytherto hath it not fayled.

Wyste thou not well, that all the lawe of
kynde is my lawe, and by god ordeyned and
stablysshed to dure by kynde reason, wher-
fore all lawe by mans wyt purueyed, ought
to be vnderput to lawe of kynde, whyche yet
hath be cōmune to euery kyndly creature, ỹ
my statutes and my lawes than ben kyndly
are generall to all peoples. Olde dounges &
by many turnynges of yeres old, and with
the peoples maner proued, mowen not so
lyghtly ben defased, but newe dounges con-
trariauntes such olde, often causen diseases
and breaken many purposes. Yet saye I not
therfore, that ayen newe my chete, meune
shulde not ordayne a newe remedy, but al-
way loke it contrary not the olde no farther
than the malyce stretcheth. Than folowth
it the olde dounges in lowe han bene vnuer-
sall, as for moost exployte forth bred: where-
fore I woll not yet, that of my lawes no-
thynge be adnulled.

But than to thy purpose, suche iangelers
and lokers, and wayters of games, whiche
thynke in ought they mowe dere, yet lowe
well alwaye, and set hem at nought, and let
thy portes ben lowe in euery wyghtes pre-
sence, and redy in thyne herte to mayntayne
that thou hast begonne, and a lytle the lasse
with meekenesse in wordes, and thus with
sleyght shalt thou surmount and dequace the
euyll in theyr hertes. And wyt ome yet is to
seme sure otherwhyle there a man wol fight
Thus with suche thynges, the tonges of e-
uyll shall ben stylled: els fully to geaunt thy
full meanynge, for sothe euer was and euer
it shall be, that myne enemyes ben afrede to
trust to anye fyghtynge, and therfore haue
thou no cowardes herte in my seruyce, no
more than somtyme thou haddest in the con
trary, for yf thou drede suche iangiers, thy

vlage

biage to make: vnderstād wel ꝑ he ꝑ dredeth any rayn to sow his cornes, he shal haue thā thynne bernes. Also he ꝑ is aferde of his clothes, let hym dauce naked. who nothyng vndertaketh, & namely in my seruyce, nothyng achieueth. After great stormes the wether is often mery and smoth. After much clatering there is mokyll rowmyuge: thus after langlynge wordes cometh huyshte, peace, and be styl. O good lady quod I than se now how fruen yere passed and more, haue I grafted & grounded a vyne, & with all the wayes that I coude I soughte to a fed me of the grape, but fruite haue I none founde. Also haue I thys seuen yere serued Laban to a wedded Rachell his doughter, but bleareyed Lya is brought to my bedde, whiche alway engendreth my sene, and is ful of children in tribulacion & in care: and although the clepynges and kyssynges of Rachell shulde seme to me swete, yet is she so barayn, that gladnesse nor ioye by no way wol springe, so that I maye wepe with Rachel, I may not ben counsayled with solace, sythen issue of myne herte by derre is layed. Nowe than I praye that to me sone fredome and grace, in this eyght yere, thus eyghteth mowe to me both by kynde & masseday after the seuen werkedayes of trauayle, to folowe the christen lawe: and what euer ye do els that thyrke Margaryte be holden so lady in your priuye chabre, that she in thys case to none other person be committed: Loke than quod she thou persewe in my seruice in which I haue the grounded, that thyrke some in thyne enemyes mowe thus on thy person be not sothed: to this man beganne to edefye, but for hys foundemente is badde to the ende maye he not it bringe.

For mekenesse in countenaunce, with a manly hert in dedes, and in longe countynaunce, is the conplaunce of my lyuerye, to al my retynue deliuered. What wenyst thou that me lyste auaunce suche personnes as louen the fryste syttynges at frestes, the hyghest stoles in churches, and in bal, loutinges of peoples in marketes and fayres, buttedfaste to byde in one place anye whyle togyther, wenynge hys owne wytte more excellent than other, scornynge all maner deuyse but hys owne: Naye naye God wotte, these shul nothyng pertreyne of my blysse. Truly my master here tofore hathe ben wyshyppe wyth my bisyle, Lyons in the felde, and lambes in chambre, Egles at assaute and maydens in halle, foxes in counsayle, styl in theyr dedes, and theyr protection is graūted redy to ben a brydge, and theyr banet is areered like wolues in the felde. Thus by these wayes shull men ben auaunced: ensample of Dauid that from kepynge of shepe, was drawen vp into the order of kyngly gouernaunce, and Iupiter frō a bole to bene Europes fere, and Julius Cesar from the lowest degre in Rome, to be mayster of all erthly princes, and Eneas from hel, to be kinge of the countre there Rome is nowe stondynge. And so to the I saye, thy grace by bearynge hereafter, maye sette the in suche plyghte, that no langlynge maye greue the lest tucke of thy hēmes that are theyr langhes, is nought to counte at a cresse in thy disauauntage.



Ther quod she hath the people in thys worlde detryed to haue had great fame in worthynesse, & hatede toule to here anye fame, and that is one of ꝑ obiections thou alegest to be ayen thyn hertely detryse. Ye forsothe quod I, & that so comenly the people wol lye, and bryngē about such enfame. Now ꝙ she yf men wyth flatteringes put on enfame, wenest thy selfe ther by ben empeyred that wenynge is wronge se why: for asmuch as they lyen thy merite encreaseth and make the bene more worthy to hem that knowen of the soth by what tytyng thou art apeyred, that in so mokyl thou arte encreased of thy beloued frendes: and forthy a wounde of thy frend to the false hatme, ye syr, and better than a false kyssyng in dyceyuable glosynge at thyne enemye, about that than to be wel with thy frende maketh such enfame. Ergo thou art encreased and not apeyred. Lady quod I, somtyme yet yf anna be in disease, the estymacyon of the enuyous people ne loketh nothyng to desertes of mennes to the merites of theyr dopynges, but only to the aduenture of fortune, and thereafter they yeuen theyr sentence: and some loken the voluntarye wyll in hys herte, and thereafter reketh hys iugement, not takynge hede to reasonne to the qualyte of the doynge, as thus. If a mā be riche and fulfylled with worldly

wrechednesse, some commenden it, and saine it is so lente by iuste cause: and he that hath aduersyte, they sayne he is weaked, & hathe deserued thylke anoye. The cõtrary of these thynges some men holden also, & sayne that to the rych, prosperyte is purueyed into his conclusyon, and vpon thys mater manye authorites of many and greate wytted clerkes they alegen. And some men sayne, thoughe all good estimacyon forsaken folke that han aduersyte, yet it is meryte & encrease of hys blysse, so that these purposes arne so wonderfull in vnderstandynge, that trewlye for myne aduersytie nowe I not howe the sentence of the indifferent people wyl iugen my fame. Therfore (quod she) yf anye wyghte shulde reue a trew sentence on such maters, the cause of the disease mayste thou se well, vnderstãde thervpon after what ende it drawth, yt is to sayne, good or badde, so ought it to haue his fame or by goodnesse, enfame by badnesse, for euery reasonable person, and namely of a wyse man, his wytte ought not vnsound reason to forme herde, sodaunly in a mater to iuge. After the sawes of the wise, thou shalt not iuge ne deme to forme thou knowe. Lady (q I) ye remembre wel that in mooste laude and prayseynge of certayne sayntes in holy churche, is to rehersen their conuertyon from badde into good, and that is so rehersed, as by a perpetuall myrroure of remembraunce in worshyppyng of tho sayntes, and good ensample to other misdoers in amẽdement. Nowe turned the romayne tedeotes fro the Romaynes, to be wyth Hanyball ayenst hys kynde nacyon: and afterwardes hym semyng the romaynes to be at the nert degree of cõfusyon, turned to hys olde alyes by whose witte after was Hanibal discomfyted. Wherfore to enfourme you Lady the maner why I meane, se nowe in my youth I was drawe to bene assentaunt and in my myghtes helpinge to certayne conuiracions and other greate matters of rulynge of citezins, and thylke thynges ben my drawers in, & exitours to tho maters werne so paynted and coloured, that at the yume face, me semed them noble & glorious to all the people: I than wenynge mykel meryte haue deserued in furtheryng and mayntenaunce of tho thynges, besyed and laboured wyth all my diligence, in werkynge of thylke maters to the ende. And trewlye lady to tell you the sothe, me roughte, lytell of anye hate of the myghty Senatours in thylke citie, ne of comunes malyce, for two skyllis: One was I had comforte to bene in suche plyte, that both profyte were to me and to my frendes. Another was for cõmen profite in cominalte is not but peace and tranquilytie, wyth iuste gouernaunce proceden from thylke profyte, sythen by counsayl of myne inwitte, me thought the fyrste paynted thynges, malyce and euell meanynge, wythouten anye good auaylynge to any people, & of tyrannye purposed, and so for pure sorow and of my medlynge and bad infame that I was in rowne, tho teetes lashed oute of myne eyen, were thus awaye washe, than the vnder hyd malyce and the rancoure of purposynge enuye fornecaste and ymagined, in distruction of mokyl people, shewed so openly, that had I bene blynde, wyth myne hondes all the circumstaunce I myght well haue feled.

Now than tho personnes that such thynges haue caste to redresse, for wrathe of my fyrste medlynge, shopen me to dwell in this pynaunde prison, tyll Lachases my threde no leger wolde twine. And euer I was sought yt me lyst to haue grace of my lyfe, and frenesse of that prison, I shulde openly confesse how peace myght ben endused to endẽ al the fyrste rancours. It was fully supposed my knowynge to be ful in tho maters. Than lady I thoughte that euery man that by anye waye of ryght, ryghtfully done, maye helpe any comune help to ben saued, which thyng to kepe aboue all thynges I am holde to mayntayne, and namely in distrovenge of a wronge, all shulde I therthroughe enpeche myne owne fere, yt he were gylty, and to do myslede assentaunt, and mayster ne frende may nought auayle to the soule of hym that in falsnesse dyeth, & also that I nere desyred wrathe of the people, ne indignacyon of the worthy, for nothynge that euer I wrought or dyd, in any doynge my selfe els, but in the mayntenaunce of these forsayd errours, & in hydinge of the prinytees therof. And that all the peoples hertes holdynge on the errours syde, weren blynde and of elde so forthe begyled, that debate and stryfe they mayntened, & in distruction on that other syde, by whyche cause the peace, that mooste

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in cominaltie shuld be desyred, was in point to be broken and adnulled. Also the Citie of London, that is to me so dere and swete, in which I was forth growen, & more kyndly loue I haue to that peace thā to any other in earthe, as euery kyndely creature hathe full appetyte to that place of hys kyndly engendrure, and to wylne reste and peace in that stede to abide: thylke peace shulde thus there haue bene broken, and of all wyse it is commended and desyred. For knowe thynge it is, all men that desyren to comen to the perfyte peace euerlastynge, muste the peace by God commended, both maintayn and kepe. Thys peace by aungelies voice was confirmed, oure God entrynge in thys worlde.

Thys as for hys Testamente he lefte to all hys frendes, whan he retourned to the place from whence he came: thys hys Apostle amonesteth to holden, wythout whyche man perfytely maye haue none insyght. Also this God by hys commynge, made not peace alone betwene heuenly and erthly bodies, but also amonge vs on earth, so he peace confirmed, that in one heade of loue, one bodie we shulde persourme. Also I remembre me wel how the name of Athenes was rather after the God of peace than of batayle, shewynge that peace mooste is necessarye to the comunaltyes & cities, I than so styred by all these wayes to some nempned, declared certeyne pointes in thys wyse. Fyrste ỳ thylke persones ỳ hadden me drawen to their purposes, and me not wetyng the priuy entent of their meaning, drawē also the feable witted people ỳ haue none insyght of gubernatyle prudēce to clamur & to crie on maters ỳ they styred, and vnder poyntes for comune auauntage, they embolded the passyte to take in the actyues doynge, and also styred innocentes of commynge to crye after thynges, whyche (quod they) may not stande but we bene executours of tho matters, and auctoryte of execucion by comen electiō to vs be delyuered & that must entre by strength of your mayntenaunce, for we out of suche degree put, oppression of these olde hynderers shall agayne surmounten and putten you in such subiection, that in endeleſſe wo ye shull complaine. The gouernementes (quod they) of your cyte left in the handes of torcencious citezins shall bryngе in pestilence and distruction to you good men, and therfore let vs haue the comune administration to abate such yuels. Also (quod they) it is worthy the good to cōmende, and the gylye desertes to chastice. There bene citezins many for ferde of execucyon that shall be doone, for errorcyons by hem committed, bene euer more ayenst these purposes, and all other good meanynges. Neuer the latter Ladye, trewelye the meanynge vnder these wordes, was fullye to haue apeched the myghty senatours, which hadden heauy herte for the misgouernaunce that they seen. And so lady whan it fell that free election, by great clamour of much people, for greate disease of mysgouernaunce so ferucntly stoden in her electio, that they hem submitted to euerye maner face, rather than haue suffred the maner and the rule of the hatrd gouernours, not wythstandinge that in the contrary helden much comune meyny that haue no consideration, but onely to voluntary lustes, withouten reason. But than thylke gouernoure so forsaken, fayninge to forne hys vndoynge for mistrule in his time, shope to haue letted thylk election, and haue made a newe hym selfe to haue bene chosen, and vnder that moksll tore haue aered.

These thynges Ladie knowen amonge the princes, & made open to the people drawen to amendement, that euery degree shal bene ordayned to stande there as he shulde, & that of errours coming, herafter men may lightly to some hande put suche remedye, in thys wyse peace and rest to be fastened & holde. Of the whyche thinges lady, thylke persons broughten in answere to some theyr moote souerayne sage, not coarted by payning dures, openlye knowlegeden, and asked therof grace, so that apertly it preueth my wordes bene sothe, without forgyng of leasynges.

But nowe it greueth me to remēbre these dyuers sentences in tangiyng of these shepy people: certes me thynketh they oughten to maken ioye that a sothe maye be knowe. For my trouth and my conscience bene wytnesse to me bothe, that thys knowyng sothe haue I layde for no harme ne malyce of tho persones, but onely for trouth of my sacramēt in my leigeaunce, by whych I was charged on my kynges behalfe. But se ye not nowe lady howe the felonous thoughtes of thys people, and coupys of wycked men, conspyren

What myghte thou more haue doone than thou dydeſte, but yf thou woldeſte in a falſe quarell haue bene a ſtynkynge martyr? I wene thou fleddeſt as longe as thou might, theyr pruvytie to counſayle, whyche thynge thou heleſte lenger than thou ſhuldeſt. And thilke that ought the money no penny wold paye, they wende thy retourne had bene an impoſſible. Howe myghte thou better haue hem proued, but thus in thy nedye diſeaſes? Nowe haſte thou enſample for whom thou ſhalte meddle: trewely thys loze is worthe many goodes.

Fte ganne loue to ſterne me theſe wordes, thynke on my ſpeche, for trewly here after it woll do the lyking, and howe ſo euer thou ſe fortune ſhape her wheele to tourne, thys meditation by no waye revolue. For certes fortune ſheweth her fayreſt, whan ſhe thynketh to begyle. And as me thoughte here to fore thou ſaydeſte thy loos in loue, for thy ryght welfarelle ought to be rayſed, ſhulde be a lowed in tyme comynge. Thou myghte in loue ſo the haue, that loos and fame ſhall ſo bene rayſed, that to thy frendes comforte and ſorowe to thyne enemyes endeleſſe ſhal endure.

But yf thou were that one ſhepe amonges the hundred were loſte in deſerte, and out of the waye had erred, and nowe to the flocke arte reſtored, the ſhepeherde hathe in the no toy, and thou aren to the forreſt tourne. But that ryght as the ſorowe and anguyſh was greate in the tyme of thyne out way goyng, ryght ſo ioye and gladneſſe ſhall be doubled to ſeme the converted, & not as Lothes wyfe ayen lokynge, but hoole counſayle wyth the ſhepe folowyng, and wyth them graſſe and herbes gadre. Neuer the later (quod ſhe) I ſaye not theſe thinge for no wantruſt that I haue in ſuppoſynge of the otherwiſe than I ſhulde. For trewly I watte well that nowe thou arte ſet in ſuch a purpoſe, out of which the lyſte not to parte. But I ſaye it, for many men there bene, that to knowing of other mennes doynges ſetten all theyr cure, and lyghtlye deſyren the badde to clatter rather than the good, and haue no wyl theyr owne maner to amende. They alſo hate of olde rá coure lyghtly hauen, & there that ſuch thyng abideth, ſodainly in theyr mothes proceedeth the abundaunce of the herte, and wordes as ſtones, ſtones out throw. wherfore my cou ſayle is euer more openlye and apertelye, in what place thou ſyt, countreplete therrours and meanynges, in as farre as thou hem wy ſyſt falſe, and leaue for no wyghte to make hem be knowe in euery bodyes eare, and be alwaye patiente and vſe Jacobes wordes, what ſo euer menne of the clappen, I ſhall ſuſtayne my ladyes wrathe whyche I haue deſerued, ſo longe as my Margaryte hathe rightwyſed my cauſe. And certes (quod ſhe) I wytneſſe my ſelfe, yf thou thus conuerted forowelte in good meanynge in thyne herte, wolte from all vanytie partyelye departe, in conſolatioun of al good pleſaunce of that Margaryte, whyche that thou deſyreſte af ter wyl thyne herte, in a maner of a mothers pytie, ſhull fully accepte the in to grace. For ryghte as thou reuereſt clothes in open ſyght ſo openlye to ſowe hem at hys worſhyppe wythouten reproſe commended. Alſo ryght as thou were enſample of muche folde er roure, ryghte ſo thou muſte be enſample of manyfolde correction, ſo good ſauoure to forgoynge all erroure diſtroyeng cauſeth di lygent loue, with many playted prayſinges to folowe, and than ſhal all the fyrſt errours make the folowynge worſhyppes to ſeme hugely encreaſed, blacke and whyte ſette to gyder, euerye for other more ſemeth, and ſo dothe euery thynges contrary in kynde. But vntame that gothe alwaye to fore, and pray ſynge worſhyppe by any cauſe folowing af ter, maketh to ryſe thylke honoure in double of welth, and that quencheth the ſpotte of the fyrſt entame. why wenuſt I ſaye theſe thyn ges, in hyndrynge of thy name? Naye nay god wotte, but for pure encreaſing worſhip thy ryghtwyſneſſe to cómende, & thy trouth to ſeme the more. woſt not wel thy ſelfe, that thou in tourme of makynge paſſeth not Ada that ete of the apple. Thou paſſeth not the ſtedfaſtneſſe of Noe, ỳ eatynge of the grape become dronke. Thou paſſeth not the cha ſtyte of Lothe, that laye by hys doughter. Eke the nobley of Abraham, who god repro ued by hys pryde. Alſo Daundes meekeneſſe, whych

whyche for a woman made Vlyxe be slawe. What also Hector of Troye, in whome no defaute myght be founde, yet is he reproued that he ne hadde wyth manhode not suffered the warre begonne, ne Paris to haue wente into Grece, by whome came all the sorowe: for trewly hym lacketh no benyme of pryue consentynge, whyche that openlye leaueth a wronge to wythsaye.

Lo the an olde prouerbe amõges many other, be that is styll semeth as he graunted.

Now by these ensamples, thou myght fully vnderstonde, that these thynges ben wryte to your lernynge, & in ryghtwysenesse of tho persones, as thus: To euery wyght hys defaute cõmitted, made goodnesse after wardes done, be the more in reuerẽce and in open the wynge, for ensample is it not songe in holye church. Lo howe necessary was Adãs synne Dauyd the kynge gat Salomõ the kynge of her that was Vryes wyfe. Truly for reprofe is none of these thinges wrytte: Right so tho I reherce thy before dede, I repreue ỹ neuer the more, ne for no vyllany of the are they reherced, but for worshypp, so t' u contynue well here after, and for profyte of thy selfe, I rede thou on hem thynke.

Then sayd I wyght thus. Lady of wyte and accorde, enuye and wrathe lucken there thou comest in place, ye were well your selue and so done many other, that whyle I administred the offyce of cõmen doynge, as in tu lynge of the stablyshmentes amõges the people, I defouled neuer my conscience for no maner dede, but euer by wytte and by counsayle of the wyseft, the maters were drawen to they: ryght endes. And thus trewlye for you ladye I haue desyred suche cure, and certes in youre seruyce was I not ydell, as ferre as suche doynge of my cure stretcheth. That is a thynge quod she that may drawe many herres of noble, and boyce of cõmune in to glorye, and fame is not but wretched and fyckle.

Alas that mankynde coueyteth in so leude a wyse, to be rewarded of any good dede, sith glorye of fame in this worlde is not but hyndryng of glorye in tyme cõmynge. And certes (quod she) yet at the hardeft such fame in to heauen, is not the erthe but a centre to the eercle of heuen. And pryche is wõder lytell in respecte of al ỹ eercle, and yet in al this pryche may no name be borne in maner of peersyng for many obstacles, as waters and wylderneffe, and straunge langages, and not onely names of men ben styled and holden oute of knowlegynge by these obstacles, but also cyties & realmes of prosperite ben letted to be know, and they: reason hyndred, so that they mow not ben parfytly in mennes proper vnderstandynge. Howe shulde then the name of a synguler londenoys passe the glorious name of London, whyche by many it is commended, and by many it is lacked, and in many mo places in erthe not knowen, then knowen: for in many countrees lytel is London in knowyng or in speche, and yet among one maner of people may not suche fame in goodnesse come, for as many as prayseu comenly as many lacken. Eye then on suche maner fame, slepe and suffre hym that knoweth preuyte of hertes, to dele suche fame, in thylke place there nothynge ayenst a sothe that neyther speake ne dare appere, by attorney ne by other maner. Howe many great named and many greate in worthynesse loted han be tofore thys tyme, that now out of memorie are slydden and clenely forgetten, for defaute of writynges, and yet scriptures for great elde so ben defaced ỹ no perpetualte maye in hem ben iuged. But yf thou wolte make comparyson to euer, what ioy mayst thou haue in erthly name, it is a layre lykenesse, a pees or one grayne of wheate, to a thousand shyppes full of corne charged. What nombre is betwene the one and thother, and yet mowe both they be nombred, and ende in rekenyng haue. But trewly all that maye be nombred is nothyng to recken, as to thylke that maye not be nombred, for ofte thynges ended is made comparyson, as one lytel another great, but in thynges to haue an ende, and another no ende, suche comparyson maye not be founden. Wherfore in heauen to ben loted wyth God hath none ende, but endlesse endureth, and thou canste nothynge done aryght, but thou desyre the rumoure therof be healed and in euerye wyghtes eare, and that dureth but a pryche in respect of the other. And so thou leekest rewarde of folkes smale wordes, and of vayne prayfynges. Trewly therin thou leesest the guerdon of vertue, and lesest the greatest baloure of conscience, and vyhap they re-

nome euerlastyng. Therfore boldely renome of fame of the erthe shuld be hated, and fame after deth shulde be desyred, of werkes of vertue asketh guerdoning. and the soule causeth al vertue: Thē the soule delyuered out of prisone of erthe, is most worthy suche guerdone amonge to haue in the euerlastynge fame, & not the body that causeth all mannes yuels.



I twoye thynges arte thou answered as me thynketh (quod Loue) and yf any thynge be in doute in thy soule, shewe it forth thyne ignoraūce to clere, and leaue it for no shame. Certes (quod I) there ne is no bodye in thys worlde, that ought coude saye by reason ayenst any of your skyles, as I leue, & by my wytte nowe sele I wel, that euell spekers or beaters of enfame, may lytel greue or lette my purpose, but rather by suche thynge my quarell to be forthered. Yea (q̄ she) and it is proued also, that the yike tewell in my kepynge shal not there thorowe be steered, of ꝑ lest moment ꝑ myght be ymagined. That is sothe (q̄ I), well (q̄ she then leneth there, to declare ꝑ thy insufficiaūce is no maner letting as thus, for that she is so worthye thou shuldest not clymbe so hygh, for thy moebles and thyne estate arne voyded, thou thynkest falle in suche myserye, that gladnesse of thy pursute woll not on thy descende. Certes (quod I) that is sothe: ryghte suche thought is in myne herte, for comenly it is spoken, and for an olde prouerbe it is leged: He that beweth to hye, wyth chyppes he maye lese his syght. Wherfore I haue ben about in al that euer I myghte, to studye wayes of remedye by one syde or by another. Nowe (quod she) god forbede ere thou seke any other doynges, but such as I haue lerned ꝑ in our restinge whyles, and suche herbes as ben planted in oure gardyns. Thou shalt well vnderstande, that aboue man is but one god alone. How (quod I) han mē to forne thys tyme trusted in wutches and chauntementes, and in helpes of spirites that dwellē in the ayre, and therby they han gettē their desyres, where as fyrst for all hys manly power he daunced behynde.

O (quod she) fye on such maters, for trewly that is sacrilege, and that shal haue no sorte with any of my seruaūtes, in myne eyen shall suche thynge not be loked after. Howe often is it cōmaunded by these passed wyse, that to one god shal men serue, and not to goddes. And who that lyst to haue myne helpes, shal aske none helpe of foule spirites. Alas, is not man maked semblable to god: wost thou not wel that al vertue of lyuelych werkynge by goddes purueyaunce is vnderputte to resonable creature in erth, is not euery thynge a thrihalfe god made buxome to mannes cōtemplacyon, vnderstandynge in heuen and in erthe, and in helle. Hath not manne beynge wyth stones, soule of werynge with trees and herbes. Hathe he not soule of felynge, wyth beestes, fyshes, and foules, and he hath soule of reason and vnderstandynge with aungels, so that in hym is knyt all maner of lyuynges by a reasonable proporcion. Also mā is made of all the foure elementes. All vniuersytee is reckened in hym alone: he hath vnder god pūcypalite aboue al thynges. Now is his soule here, now a thousand myle hence, now ferre nowe nygh, nowe hye now lowe, as ferre in a momente, as in mountenaunce of ten wynter, and al thys is in mannes gouernaunce & dyspositon. Then sheweth it, ꝑ men ben lyche vnto goddes, and chyldren of moste heyghte. But now sythen al thynges vnderputte to ꝑ wyll of reasonable creatures, god forbede any man to wynne that lordshyp, & aske helpe of any thynge lower then hym selfe, & thē namely of foule thynges innominable. Nowe thē why shuldest thou wene to loue to hyghe sythen nothynge is the aboue but god alone. Trewly I wote well, ꝑ thylke tewell is in a maner euē in lyne of degre there thou art thy selfe, & nought aboue, saue thus. Angel vpon angell, man vpon man, and deuell vpon deuell, han a maner of souerayngnete, and that shall cease at the daye of dome: and so I saye, thoughe thou be putte to serue the yike tewel duryng thy lyfe, yet is that no seruage of vnderputtynge, but a maner of trauaylynge pleasaunce, to conquere and gette that thou haste not. I sette nowe the hardest, in my seruyce nowe thou deidest for sorowe of wātynge in thy desyres: trewlye all heauenlye bodyes wyth one voyce shul come & make melody in thy comynge, and saye welcome oure fere and worthy to entre into Jupyters lore for thou wyth myght haste ouercome dethe,

thou

thou woldest neuer flytte out of thy seruyce, and we all shul now pray to the goddes rew by rowe to make thilke Margarite ꝑ no routh had in this persone, but vnkyndely wythout comforte let the deye, shall besette her selfe in suche wyse, that in erthe for parte of vengeaunce, shal she no tyme haue in loues seruyce, and when she is deed, then shal her soule ben brought vp in to thy presence, and whyther thou wylte chese, thylke soule shall ben committed. Or els after thy dethe anone all the forsayd heuenly bodyes by one accorde, shall benómen from thylke perle, all the vertues that fyrste her were taken, for she hathe hem forfeyted, by that on the my seruaunte in thy lyue she wolde not suffre to worche all vertues, withdrawen by myght of the hygh bodyes: why then shuldest thou wene so any more. And yf thy lyste to loke vpon the lawe of kynde, and wyth order whyche to me was ordayned, sothely none age, none ouertournynge tyme, but hytherto had no tyme ne power to chaunge the weddinge ne ꝑ knotte to vnbynde of two hertes thorow one assent in my presence together accorden to endure tyll dethe hem departe. What trowest thou euery ydeot wotte the menyng and the priuy entente of these thynges: they wene forsothe that suche accorde may not be, but the rose of mayd enhede be plucked, do waye, do waye, they knowe nothyng of thys: for consente of two hertes alone, maketh the fastenynge of the knotte, neyther law of kynde, ne mannes lawe, determyneth neyther the age ne ꝑ qualyte of persones, but onely accorde betwene thylke twaye. And trewlye after tyme that suche accorde by theyr consent in hert, is ensealed & put in my treasory amonges my priuy thynges: then gynneth the name of spousayle, and although they breaken forwarde both, yet suche matter ensealed is kept in remembraunce for euer. And se nowe that spouses haue the name anone after accorde, thoughe the rose be not take. The aungell badde Joseph take Marye hys spouse, and to Egypte wende: Lo she was cleped spouse, and yet to some ne after neyther of hem bothe mente no fleshly luste knowe, wherfore the wordes of trouthe accorden, that my seruauntes shulden forsake both father and mother, and be adherande to hys spouse, and they two in vnite of one flesshe shulden accorde. And thys wyse two that werne fyrste in a lytell maner dyscordaunt, hyghet that one and lowet that other, bene made euenlyche in gree to stonde. But nowe to enfourme the that ye ben lyche to goddes, these clerkes sayne, and in determynacion shewen, that thre thinges hauen ꝑ names of goddes ben cleped, that is to saine: man, dyuell, and ymages, but yet is there but one god, of whom al goodnesse, all grace, and al vertue cometh, and he is louyng & trewe, and euerlastynge, & pryme cause of al beynge thynges: but men bene goddes, louynge and trewe, but not euerlastyng, and that is by adoption of the euerlastynge god. Dyuels ben goddes styrynge by a maner of lyuynge, but neyther bene they trewe ne euerlastyng, and theyr name of godlyheed they han by vsurpacion, as the prophete sayeth: Al goddes of gentyles, that is to saye paynims, are dyuels But ymages bene goddes by nuncupacion, and they ben neyther lyuynge ne trewe ne euerlastynge: After these wordes they eclapē goddes ymages wrought with mennes handes. But nowe reasonable creature, that by adopcion alone arte to the greate god euerlastynge, and therby thou arte god cleaped: let thy fathers maners so entre thy wyttes, that thou myght folowe, in as moche as longeth to the thy fathers worthyppe, so that in nothynge thy kynde from hys wyll declyne, ne from hys nobley peruerte. In thys wyse yf thou werche, thou arte aboue all other thynges saue god alone, and so say nomore thyne herte to serue in to hye a place.

Fully haue I nowe declared thyne estate to be good, so thou folowe thereafter, & that the abiection fyrste be the aleged in worthines of thy margarite shal not the lette, as it shal fother ꝑ, & encrease the, it is nowe to declare, ꝑ last abiection in nothyng may greue.

Yes certes (ꝙ I) both greue and let muste it nedes, the contrary maye not ben proued, and se now why. Whyle I was glorious in worldly welfulnesse, and had such goodes in welth as maken men ryche, tho was I drawn in to companyes that loos, pryse, and name yeuen: tho louteden blasours, tho curteyden glosours, tho welcomede flatterers, tho worshypped thilke, that nowe deynen not to loke Euery wight in such erthly wele habaūdant

ys hold noble, precious, benigne, and wyse to do what he shall, in any degre that men hym set, al be it that the sothe be in the contrary of all tho thynges: But he that can, ne neuer so well hym behaue, & hath vertue habóudaunt in manyfolde maners, & be not welthed with suche erthly goodes, is holde for a foole, and sayd hys wyt is but sotted. Lo howe falle for auer is holde trewe. Lo howe trewe is cleaped falle for wantynge of goodes. Also lady, dygnities of offyce maken men mykel comended as thus: he is so good, were he oute hys pere shuld men not fynde. Truely I trowe of some suche that are so prayed, were they out ones, another shulde make hym so be knowe he shulde of no wyse no more ben loked after: but onely fooles wel I wotte, desyren suche new thinges. Wherfore I wónder that thilke gouernoure, out of whome alone the causes proceden, that gouerne all thynges, whych that hath ordeyned thys world in werkes of the kyndely bodyes so be governed, not with vnstedfast or happyous thynge, but with rules of reason, whych shewen the course of certayne thynges: why suffreth he such flydyng chaunges that myshurmen suche noble thynges as ben we men, that arne a layte parcell of the erthe, and holde the vpperest degre vnder god of benigne thinges, as ye saide right nowe your selfe, shulde neuer man have bene set in so worthy a place, but if his degre were ordeyned noble. Alas, thou that kuyrest the purueyaunce of al thynges, why lokest thou not to amenden these defautes: I se shrewes that han wicked maners, sytten in chayres of lones, lambes to punysshen, there wolues shulden be punysshed. Lo vertue shynende naturalily, for pouerte lurketh and is hydde vnder cloude. but the moone falsely for some, as I knowe my selfe, for auer & yeftes hath vsurped to shyne by daye lyght, vb peyntace of other mens prayshynges: and truely thylke forged lyst fouly shuld fade, were the trouth away of colours fayned. Thus is night turned into daye, and daye in to nyght, wynter into sommer, & sommer into wynter, not in dede, but in mysclepyng of folysche people.

Now (quod she) what weenest thou of these thynges. howe feelest thou in thyne herte, by what gouernaunce þ̄ thys cometh aboute?

Certes (q̄ I) that wotte I neuer, but yf it be that fortune hath graunt from aboue, to lede the ende of men as her lyketh. Ah nowe I se (quod she) thentent of thy meanyng: Lo bycause thy worldly goodes ben fullych dyspente, thou berafte out of dygnite of offyce, in whych thou madest the gatherynge of thylke goodes, and yet dyddest in that office by cousayle of wyse, any thynge were ended: & true were vnto hem, whose profyte thou shuldest loke, and seest nowe many that in thylke nerueest made of the mokel, and now for glosing of other, demeth the nought to forther, but enhaunsen falle shrewes, by wytnessynge of trouthe. These thynges greueth thyne herte to sene thy selfe thus abated, & then kravte of mankynde ne setteth but lytel by the lesers of suche rychesse, haue he neuer so moche vertue and so thou weenest of thy selfwell to renne in dyspyte, and not ben accepted into grace: All thys shal the nothyng hynder. Nowe (q̄ she) fyrst thou wost wel thou lostest nothing that euer thou myghtest chalēge for thyne owne: when nature brought the forthe, come thou not naked out of thy mothers wombe: thou haddest no rychesse, and when thou shalt entre into the ende of euery fleshly body, what shalt thou have with the then. So euery rychesse thou haste in tyme of thy lyuynge, nys but lente. thou myght therin chalenge no proprtie. And se now euery thyng that is a mánes owne, he may do therwyth what hym lyketh, to yeue or to kepe: but ryches thou playnest from the lost, yf thy myght had stretched so ferforth fayne thou woldst have hem kept multiplied with mo other: and so ayenst thy wyl ben they departed fró the, wherfore they were neuer thyn. And if thou laudest & loyest any wyght for he is stuffed with such maner rychesse, þ̄ arte in þ̄ beleue begyled, for thou weenest thylke ioy to be selynesse or els fals, & he that hath loste suche happes to ben vnsely yea forsoth (q̄ I). Wel (q̄ she) then will I proue that vnsely in that wyse is to prayse, & so þ̄ tother is þ̄ cōtrary to be lacked. Nowe so (q̄ I) & for vnsely (q̄ she) begyleth not, but sheweth thentent of her workyng. Et contra Selynesse begyleth, for in prosperite she maketh a lape in blyndnesse, that is she wyndeth hym to make sorowe when she withdraweth wolt thou not (q̄ she) prayse hym better that sheweth to þ̄ hys herte, tho it be with bytāde wordes & dispytous, thē him þ̄ gloseth & thinketh in theyr absence to do the many harmes

Certes

Certes (q I) the one is to cõmende, & the other to lacke & dyspyce. I ha (q she) ryght so ease whyle he lasteth, gloseth & flatereth, and lyghtly voydeth whē she moste pleasantly sheweth, & euer in her absence she is about to do the tene & sorowe in herte: but vnsely all be it wyth bytande chere, sheweth what she is, & so doth not that other, wherfore vnsely dothe not begyle. Selynesse dysceyueth: vnsely put awaye doute. That one maketh men blynde, that other openeth theyr eyen in shewyng of wretchednesse. The one is ful of drede to lese that is not his owne: that other is sobre and maketh men dyscharged of mokell heuynesse in burthen. The one drawyth a man from be ry good, ỳ other haleth hym to vertue by the bookes of thoughtes. And wenyst thou not that thy dysease hath done the mokel more to wynne, then euer yet thou lostest: and more then euer the contrary made the wynne. Is not a greate good to thy thynkynge, for to knowe the hertes of thy forthfast frēdes: Par dy they ben proued to ỳ ful, & the trewe haue dyscouered from the false. Trewly at the goynge of the yike bretel toy, ther vede no more aware, then the yike that was not thyne proper: He was neuer from that lyghtly departed, thyne owne good therfore leaueth it styl wyth the. Nowe good quod she for howe mothe woldest thou sometyme haue boughte thys very knowyng of thy frendes, from the flatteryng tyes that the gloseth, when thou thought thy self sely. But thou that playnest of losse in rychelle, hast founden the most dere worthy thynge that thou clepest vnsely, hath made the mothe thynge to wynnen. And also for conclusion of all, he is frende that nowe leaueth not hys herte fro thyne helpes. And yf that Margarite denyeth nowe not to suffre her vertues shyne to the wardes, wyth spreadynge beames, as farre or farther then yf thou were sely in worldly ioye: trewely I saye not els but she is somdele to blame.

Ah, peace quod I and speake nomore of thys, myne hert breaketh, now thou touchest any suche wordes. I well quod she, then let vs syngen, thou hearest no more of these thynges at thys tyme.

¶ Thus endeth the fyrste boke of the Testament of Loue, and here after folowyth the seconde.

VEry welthe maye not be founden in al thys world and that is well sene:

Lo howe in my moost comforte, as I wende & moste supposed to haue hadde ful answere of my contrary thoughtes, sodaynly it was vanysshed. And all the workes of man faren in the same wyse, when folke wenen beste her entente for to haue, and wylles to performe, anone chaungynge of the lyft syde to ỳ ryght halue, tourneth it so clene into another kynde that neuer shall it come to the fyrste plyte in doynge.

O thys wrongful sterynge so soone other wyse out of knowynge, but for my purpose was at my begynnynge, and so dureth yet yf God of hys grace tyme woll me graunt, I thynke to performe thys worke, as I haue begonne in loue, after as my thynne wytte, with inspiracion of him that hideth al grace woll suffre. Greuously god wotte haue I suffred a great throwe that the romayne Emperour, whyche in vnite of loue shulde accorde and euery wyth other, in cause of other to a manner, and namely sythe thys empyre to be corrected of so many sectes in hereste, of faith, of seruyce, o rule in loues religion. Trewlye al were it but to shende erronious opinions I maye it no lenger suffre: for many menne there ben that sayne loue to ben in gravel and sande, that wyth sercled synge and flowynge wo worth, as reches that sodaynly vanysheth And some sayne that loue shuld be in wyndy blastes that stoundmele turneth as a vane, and glorye of renome, whyche after lustes of the vayaunt people is areysed or stylled. Many also wenen that in the sonne and the moone, and other sterres, loue shulde ben founden, for amonge all other planettes moste soueranly they shynen, as dygnityes in reuerence of estates rather then good han and occupyen. Ful many also there ben that in okes and in huge postes supposen loue to be grounded, as in strength & in might, which mowen not helpen theyr owne wretchednesse, when they gynne to fall. But suche dyuersyte of sectes ayenst the ryghtfull byleue of loue, these errours ben forth spredde, that loues seruauntes in trewe rule and stedfaste fayth, in no place darne apere: Thus irrecuperable ioy is

wente, and anoy endeſſe is entred, for no man aryght reproueth ſuche errours, but confyrmen theyr wordes, and ſayne that bad is noble good, and goodnes is badde: to whyche folke the prophet bryddeth, wo without ende.

Alſo many tonges of great falſe techinges in gylynge maner, principally in my tymes, not only wyth wordes, but alſo wyth armes loues ſeruauntes and profeſſe in hys religyó of trewe rule, purſewen to confoúden and to dyſtroyen. And for as moche as holy fathers that oure chriſten faythe aproued and ſtrengthed to the iewes, as to mé reſonable, and of dyuinite lerned, proued thilke fayth with reſones, and wyth authorities of the olde teſtament & of the newe, her pertinacye to diſtroy But to paynyms, that for beeſtes and houndes were holde, to put hem out of theyr errour, was myracles of god ſhewed. Theſe thynges were figured by comynge of thagel to the ſhepeherdes, and by the ſterre to paynyms kynges, as who ſayeth angel reſonable to reſonable creature, and ſterre of myracle to people beſtial not lerned, werne ſent to enfourme. But I louers clerke in all my comynge and with al my mightes, truly I haue no ſuch grace in vertue of myracles, ne for to dyſcomfyte falſhedes ſuffyſeth not authorites alone, ſythen that ſuche heretykes and mayntenours of falſyhes. Wherfore I wote wel ſythen that they ben men, and reaſon is approued in hem, the clowde of errour hath her reaſon bewonde probable reſons, whych that catchende wyt rightfully may not with ſtyte. By my trauaylynge ſtudye I haue ordeyned hem, wyth ỳ authorite myſgloſed by mannes reaſon, to graunt ſhall be enduced.

Now gyrneth my penne to quake, to thynken on the ſentences of the enuyous people, whych alwaye ben redy both ryder and goer to ſkorne and to tape thys leude boke, and me for rancoure & hate in theyr hertes they ſhulden ſo dyſpyſe, that althoughe my booke be leude, yet ſhall it ben more leude holden, and by wycked wordes in many maner apayred. Certes me thynketh the ſowne of theyr bad ſpeche, ryght nowe is full both myne eares. O good precious Margarite, myne herte ſhulde wepe yt, I wylle ye token hede of ſuche maner ſpeche, but trewly I wotte wel in that your wyſedom ſhal not aſterte. For of god maker of kynde wytneſſe I take, that for none enuy ne yuell haue I drawe thys matter together, but onely for goodneſſe to maintayne, and errours in falſyhees to deſtroye. Wherfore (as I ſayde) wyth reaſon I thynke, thylke forſayd errours to diſtroye and dequace.

Theſe reaſons and ſuche other, yf they enduce men in loues ſeruyce, trewe to beleue of parfyte blyſſe, yet to full fayth in credence of deſerte, fully mowe they not ſuffiſe, ſythen faythe hath no meryte of mede, when mannes reaſon ſheweth experience in doynge. For vtterlye no reaſon the parfyte blyſſe of loue by no waye may make to be comprehended. Lo what is a parcell of louers loye, parfyte ſcyence in good ſeruyce, of theyr deſyre to comprehende in bodely doynge the lykyng of the ſoule, not as by a glaſſe to haue contemplacyon of tyme comynge, but thylke fyrſte ymagyned and thought, after face to face in beholdynge: what herte, what reaſon, what vnderſtandynge can make hys hewen to be feled and knowe wythout aſſaye in doynge? certes none. Sythen then of loue cometh ſuche fruyte in blyſſe, and loue in hym ſelfe is the moſte amonge other vertues, as clerkes ſayne: The fede of ſuche ſpryngynge in all places, in all countreys, in al worldes ſhulde ben ſowe.

But o welaway thylke fede is forſake, & mowen not ben ſuffred the lade tyllers to ſet a werke wythout medlynge of cockle badde wedes whych ſomtyme ſtonken hath caught the name of loue amonge ydiotes and badde meanynge people. Neuer the later, yet how ſo it be that men cleape thylke kynge preeyouſeſt in kynde, wyth many the names, that other thynges, that the ſoule yeuen the fyke noble name, it ſheweth well that in a maner men haue a great lykynge in worſchyppynge of thilke name, wherfore thys werke haue I wyrt, and to the tytle of loues name, I haue it auowed in a maner of ſacrifice, that where euer it be radde, it mowe in merite by the excellence of thylke name the more were in authoute and worſchyppe of takynge in hede, and to what entente it was ordeyned, the infeeres mowen be moued: Euery thynge to whome is owande occaſyon done as for hys ende Ariſtotle ſuppoſeth that the actes of euery thynge ben in a maner hys fynall cauſe.

I fynall

A fynal cause is nobleter or els euen as noble as thylke thynge that is fynally to thilke ende, wherfore accion of thyng euerlastyng, is demed to be eternal, and not temporal, sythen it is his fynal cause: Ryght so the actes of my boke loue, and loue is noble, wherfore though my boke be leude, the cause vp which I am stered, and for whom I ought it done, noble for sothe ben bothe. But bycause that in connynge I am yonge, and canne yet but crepe, this leude A.b.c. haue I lette in to lernyng, for I can not passen the tellyng of thre as yet: and yf god wyl in shorte tyme I shall amende this leudnesse in sownyng syllables, wherby thyng for dulnesse of wytte I may not in thre letters declare. For trewly I saye the goodnesse of my Margaryte perle wolde yeue mater in endityng to many clerkes: certes her mercy is more to me swetter than any lyuynges, wherfore my lyppes mowen not suffyse in spekyng of her full laude and worshyppe as they shulde. But who is that in knowynge of the orders of heuen, & putteth his resones in the ertheⁿ for sothe may not wisely even, the shynyng sonne of vertue in bright wheles of this Margaryte behold, therfore as yet I may her not discryue in vertue as I wolde. In tyme comyng in another tre tyse thorowe goddes grace, this sonne in clereneſſe of vertue to be knowe, and howe she enlumyneth al this day, I thynke to declare.

IN this meane whyle this cõfortable lady gaunne syng a wonder mater of endityng in latyn, but trewly the noble colours in rethorykwyse knytte were so craftely, p my conning wol not stretche to reherse but the sentence I trow sondele haue I in mynde. Certes they were wonder swete of sowne, and they were touched al in lamentacyon wyse, and by no wordes of mirthe: Lo thus gaunne she synge in latyn, as I may cõstrewe it in our englysshe tonge.

Alas that these heuenly bodyes their light and course shewen as nature yaue hem in cõmaundement at the gynnyng of the first age, but these thynges in free choyce of reson han none understondynge: but man that ought to passe all thynge of doynge, of ryght course in kynde, ouer whelmed sothnesse by wrongfull tytle, and hath drawē the sterre of enuye to gon by his syde, that the clyps of me that shulde be his shynande sonne, so ofte is seyl, that it wened thilke errour thorowe hē come in, shulde ben myne owne defaute. Trewely therfore I haue me withdrawe, & made my dwellynge out of lande in an yle by my selfe, in the ocean closed, and yet sayn there many they haue me harberowed but god wote they faylen. These thynges me greuen to thynke, and namely on passed gladnesse, that in this worlde was wonte me dysporte of hygh and lowe, and nowe it is fayled: they that wolde mayster̃es me haue in thylke stoundes. In heuen on hyghe above Saturnes sphere, in seasonable tyme were they lodged, but nowe come queynte conseylours that in no house woll suffre me sojourne, wherof is pyte: and yet sayne some that they me haue in cellet wyth wyne shede, in gernere there corne is layde, couered wyth whete, in sacke lowed with wolle, in purse with money fall knytte, amonge iuuels moued in a wyche, in presse amonge clothes layde wyth ryche peure arayed, in stable among horse & other beestes, as hogges, shepe, and nete, and in other sundry wyse. But thou maker of hyght in wynkynge of thyne eye the sonne is queynt shewt ryght well that I in trewe name was neuer thus herberowed. Sometyme to some the sonne in the seuenth partye was suyten, I bare bothe croſſe and mytre, to yeue it where I wolde. With me the pope went afore and I tho was worshypped of all holye churche kynges baden me their crownesholde, & the lawe was set as it shulde: tofore the ryge as well the poore burelle shewe hys grete as the ryche, for all hys money. I defended the tayllages, and was redy for the poore to pay. I made gret feestes in my tyme, & noble soges & maryed damoselles of gētyl feture, without ten golde or other rychesse. Poore clerkes for wytte of schole, I lette in churches, and made such persones to preache: and tho was seruyce in holy churche honest and deuoute, in pleasaunce bothe of god and of the people. But nowe the leude for symonye is anauntred, and shendeth all holy churche. Nowe is stewarde for his achates, nowe is courtyour for hys debates, nowe is eschetoure for hys wronges, nowe is losell for hys songes, persones and prouendre alone, wyth whych maynye thrittye shulde encreasse. And yet is thys

thewe behynde, free herte is forsake, and lo-
sengeour is take. Lo it accordeth, for suche
there ben that voluntarye lustes haunten in
courte with rybaudye, that tyl midnight and
more woll playe and wake, but in the chur-
che at matyns he is behynde, for yuell dispo-
sycion of hys stomake: therfore he shulde eate
beane breed, & so dyd hys fyre, his estate ther-
with to strengthen. Hys auter is broke, and
lowe lythe in poynte to gone to the erth, but
hys horse muste ben easy and hye to beare
hym ouer great waters. Hys chalyce poore,
but he hath ryche cuppes. No towayle but a
shete there god shal ben handled. And on his
meate borde there shal ben borde clothes and
towelles many payre. At masse serued but a
clergyon: fyue squiers in hall. Poore chaun-
sell, open holes in euery syde: beddes of sylke
with tapytes goyng all aboute his chambre.
Poore masse boke and lewde chapelayne, and
broken surplyce wyth manye an hole: good
houndes and many, to hounte after harte &
hare to lede in theyr leeshes. Of poore men
haue they great care, for they euer craue, and
nothynge offren, they wolden haue hem dol-
uen. But amonge legystres there dare I not
come, my doynge they sayne maken hem ne-
dy, they ne wolde for nothynge haue me in
towne, for than were tort and forthe nought
worthe an hawe aboute and pleasen no men
but thylke greuous & torcious ben in myght
and in doynge: these thynges to some sayde
mowe well yf men lyste tyme, trewly they a-
corde nothynge. And for as moche as al thyn
ges by me shulden of ryght ben gouerned, I
am sorye to se that gouernaunce fayleth, as
thus: to sene smale and lowe gouerne the hye
and bodyes aboue. Certes that polesye is
naught, it is forbode by them that of gouer-
naunce treaten and enformen. And right as
beestly wytte shulde ben subiect to reason, so
erthly power in it selfe, the lower shulde ben
subiect to the hygher. What is worth thy bo
dye, but it be gouerned wyth thy soule ryght
so lyttell or naught is worthe erthely power,
but if reignatyle prudence in heedes gouerne
the smale, to whyche heedes the smale owen
to obey, and suffre in their gouernaunce. But
soueraynnesse ayenwarde shulde thynke in
thys wyse: I am seruaunt of these creatures
to me delyuered, not lorde but defendour, not
mayster but enfourmer, not possessoure but
in possessyon, & to hem lyche a tree in whiche
sparowes shullen stelen, her bydes to no-
ryshe and forthe bringe vnder surerye avenst
all rauenous foules and beestes, and not to
be tyraunt them selfe. And than the smale in
reste and quyete, by the heedes well disposed
owen for their soueraynes helth and prospe-
ryte to pray, and in other doynges, in mayn-
tenaunce therof performe, wythouten other
admynistracion in rule of any maner gouer-
naunce. And they wyt haue in hem, and grace
to come to such thinges, yet shulde they ceale
tyll theyr heedes them cleped, although pro-
syte and pleasaunce shulde folowe. But trew
lye other gouernaunce ne other medlynge
ought they not to clayme, ne the heedes on
hem to put. Trewly amonges cosynage dare
I not come, but yf rychesse be my meane, soth
ly the and other bodily goodes maketh nygh
cosynage, ther neuer propynquite ne alyaunce
in lyue was, ne shulde haue be, nere it for her
medling maners, wherfore kyndly am I not
ther leged. Pouert of kynred is behynde, ry-
chesse suffreth hym to passe: truly he saith he
come neuer of Japhetes chylde. Wherof I
am sory that Japhetes chyldren for pouert,
in no linage ben reken ed, & Caynes chyldren
for ryches be maked Japhetes heires. Alas
thys is a wonder chaunge betwene the two
Noes chyldren, sythen that of Japhetes of-
spryng comeden knightes, & of Cayn disce-
ded ȳ lyne of seruage to his brothers chylde
Lo howe gentylesse and seruage as cosyns,
bothe discended out of two bretherne of one
body: wherfore I saye in sothnesse, that gen-
tylesse in kynrede maken not gentyll lynage
in succession, without desserte of a mans owen
selfe. Where is nowe the lyne of Alysaundre
the noble, or els of Hector of Troye, who is
discended of ryght bloode of lyne fro kyng Ar
tour. Parde syr Perdicas, whom that kyng
Alisandre made to be his heire in Grece, was
of no kynges bloode, hys dame was a tombe
stere. Of what kynred ben the gētyles in our
dayes: I trow therfore if any good be in gen-
tylesse, it is only that it semeth a maner of ne
cessyte be input to gentrymen, that they shul-
den not barren fro the vertues of their aun-
cestres. Certes al maner lynage of men ben
euen lyche in byrth, for one father maker of al
goodnes enformed hem all, & al mortal folke
of one sede arne greyned, wherto auaūt men

of her

of her lynage, in cosynage or in elde fathers. Loke nowe the gynnyng, and to god maker of mans person there is no clerke ne no worthy in gentylesse: and he that norysheth hys corage wyth vyces and vnresonable lustes, and leaueth the kynde course, to whych ende hym brought forthe hys byrthe, trewly he is vngentyll, and amonge clerkes may ben nepned. And therfore he that woll ben gentyl, he mote dauten hys flesche fro vyces that causen vngentylnesse, and leaue also reignes of wicked lustes, and drawe to hym vertue, that in all places gentylnesse gentylmen maketh.

And so speke I in feminyne gendre in generall, of tho persones at the reuerence of one, whom euery wyght honoureth, for her bounte and her nobilesse ymade her to god so dere that hys moder she became, and she me hath had so great in worshyp, that I nyll for nothynge in open declare, that in any thynge avenst her secte mave sowene: for all vertue and al worthynesse of pleasaunce in hem habounderh. And although I wold any thyng speke trewly I can not, I may fynde in yuel of hem no maner mater.

Right wyth these wordes she stynte of that lamentable melodye, and I gaune wyth a fruely herte to praye, yf that it were lykynge vnto her noble grace, she wold her deyne to declare me the mater that fyrste was begonne, in whiche she lefte and stynte to speke before me she gan to synge.

Quod she thys is no newe thyng to me, to sene you menne desyren after mater, whyche your selfe caused to vorde.

Ah good lady quod I in whom victorie of strength is proued aboue al other thynge, after the iugement of Ector am, whose lordshyp all lignes: who as that right as emperour he commaundeth, whether thilke ben not wome, in whose lykenesse to me ye apeten. For right as man halte the principalte of all thyng vnder his beynge, in the masculyne gender, and no mo genders ben there but masculyne and femenyne, all the remenaunt ben no gendres but of grace, in facultie of grammer. Right so in the femenyne, the women holden the vpperest degree of all thynges vnder thilke gendre conteyned. Who bryngeth forth kynges, whyche that ben lordes of see and of earthe and al peoples of wome ben borne: they norysche hem that graffen vynes, they maken men comforte in their gladde cheres. Her sorowe is dethe to mannes herte, without women the beyng of me were impossible. They conne with their swetnesse the crewel herte rauysche and make it meke, burome, and benigne, wythout violence meuynge. In beautie of their eyen, or els of other maner fetures is all mes desyres, yea more tha in golde precious stones, eyther any rychesse. And in thys degree lady your selfe manye hertes of men haue so bounden, that parfyte hyrsse in womankynde to ben, men wenen, and in no thynge els. Also lady the goodnesse, the vertue of women, by properte of discreycon is so well knowen, by lyteinesse of malyce, that desyre to a good asker by no wayc conne they warne: and ye thanne that woll not passe the kynde werchynge of your sectes by generall discreycon, I wotte wel ye wol so enclyne to my prayere, that grace of my requeste shall fully ben graunted. Certes quod she thus for the more parte fareth al mankynde to praye, and to crye after womans grace, and fayne manye fantasyes to make hertes enclyne to your desyres: and whan these sely wome for freelte of their kynde beleuen your wordes, and wenen al be go pell the promyse of your behestes, than graunt they to you their hertes, and fulfyllen your lustes, wherthrought they: lyberte in maystreshyp that they tofore had is thralled, and so maked soueravn and to be prayed that fyrste was seruaunte, and boyce of prayer dyed. Anone as fylled is your luste, manye of you be so trewe, that lytell hede take ye of suche kyndenesse, but wyth trayson anon ye thynke hem begyle, and let lyght of that thynge whyche fyrste ye maked to you wonders dere, so what thyng to women it is to loue any wight er she hym well knowe, and haue him proued in many halfe for euery glytteryng thynge is nat golde, and vnder colour of fayre speche many vices may be hid and conseled. Therfore I rede no wyght to trust on you to rath, mens chere and her speche right gylefull is full ofte, wherfore without good assay, it is nat worthe on many on you to truste: trewly it is right kyndely to euery man that thynketh women betraye, and shewe outward al goodnesse, til he haue his wil per

formed

formed. Lo the bryde is begyled with the mery voice of the foulers whistel. Whan a woman is closed in your nette, than wol ye causes fynden, and beare vnkyndenesse her vnhande or falsete vpon her putte, youre owne malycious trayson wyth suche thynge to excuse. Lo than han women none other wreth in vengeaunce, but blodet and wepe tyl hem lyst flyte, and sorily her mishap complayne, and is put in to wenynge that all men ben so vntrewe. Howe often haue men chaunged her loues in a lytell whyle, or elis for faylyng theyr wyll in theyr places hem sette: for frendshyp shal be one, and fame with another him lyste for to haue, and a thirde for delyte, or elis were he loste bothe in packe and in clothes: Is this fayre nay god wot, I maye nat tell by thousande partes, the wronges in trechery of suche false people, for make they neuer so good a bonde, all sette ye at a myte whan your hert tourneth: And they that wenen for sorow of you dey, the pyte of your false hette is flowe out of towne. Alas therfore, ꝑ euer anye woman wolde take anye wyght in her grace, tyll she knowe at the full on whome she myght at all assayes trust. Women cone no more crafte in queynte knowynge, to vnderstande the false disceyuable conuetementes of mannes begylynges. Lo howe it fareth, though ye men groneu and cryen, certes it is but disceyt, and that preueth well by thendes in your werkynge. Howe many women haue ben lorne, and wyth shame foule shent by long tarying tyme, which thorowe ménes gyle haue ben disceyued euer their fame shal dure, and theyr dedes raddle and longe in many londes, that they hay done recouereu shal they neuer, but alwaye ben demed lightly, in suche plyte ayen shulde they fall, of whyche slaunders and tenes ye false men and wicked ben the verey causes, on you by ryght ought these shames and these reproues all holy descende. Thus arne ye all nyghe vntrewe, for all youre fayre speche youre herte is full fyrkell. What cause han ye women to despyse better fruyte than they ben, ne swetter spyces to youre behoue mowe ye not fynde, as farre as worldely bodyes stretchen. Loke to theyr forynge at the makynge of theyr persones by god in toye of paradyce, for goodnesse of mans propre bodye were they maked, after the sawes of the Byble, rehersynge goddes wordes in thys wyse: It is good to mankynde that we make to hym an helper. Lo in paradyse for your helpe was this tree grafted, out of whyche all lynage of man descendeth: yf a man be noble frute, of noble frute it is sprongen: the blysse of paradyse to mennes sory hertes, yet in thys tree abydeth. O noble helpes ben these trees, and gentyll ie well to ben worshypped of euery good creature: he that hem anoyeth dothe hys owne shame, it is a comfortable perle ayenst all tenes. Euerye companye is myrthed by theyr present beyng. Trewely I wysse neuer vertue, but a woma were therof the rote. What is beauen the worse though sarazins on it lyen? Is your fayrthe vntrewe though renno gates maken theron leasynges. If the fyre dothe anye wyght brenne, blame hys owne wytte that put him selfe so farre in the heate. Is not fyre gentyllest and moste element, comfortable amonges all other fyre is chefe werker in forthersynge fustenaunce to mankynde: shall fyre ben blamed for it brende a foole naturelly by hys owne fluxy wytte in sterynge? Ah wrecked folkes, for youre propre malyce and vnkyndnesse of youre selfe: ye blame & dispyse the precyous thyng of youre kynde, and whyche thynges amonge other moste ye desyren. Trewely Nero and hys chyldren ben shrewes, that dispysen so theyr dames. The wyckednesse and grylyng of mé, in disclaundrynge of thylke that moste bathe hem gladed and pleased, were impossyble to write or to nempne. Neuer ꝑ later yet I say he that knoweth a way, may it lightly passe: eke an herbe proued may lately to smertande sores ben layde: So I say, in him that is proued is nothyng such ryels to gelle. But these thynges haue I rehersed to warne you women al at ones that to lyghtly without good assaye ye assenten not to mannes speche. The sonne in the day light is to knowen from the moone that shyneth in the nyght. Nowe to the thy self, quod she, as I haue ofte sayd, I knowe wel thyne herte thou arte none of al the forsayde nempned people, for I knowe wel the contynuaunce of thy seruyce, that neuer syrthen I set the a werke, myght thy Margaryte for plesaunce, frendshyp, ne fayrehede of none other, be in poynte moued fromé thyne herte, wherfore in to myne housholde hastely I wol that thou entre, and all ꝑ parfyte pu-

lyte of my werkynge make it be knowe in thy vnderstondynge, as one of my priuy famyliers. Thou desyrest (q she) fayne to here of tho thynges there I lefte. Yea forsothe (q I) that were to me a great blysse. Nowe (q she) for thou shalt not wene that womans condycyons for fayre speche suche thynge belongeth.

THou shalt (q she) vnderstond fyrste amonge al other thynges, that all the cure of my seruyce to me in the parfyte blysse in doynge is desyred in euery mannes herte, be he neuer so moche a wretche, but euerye man trauayleth by dyuers studye, and seke thylke blysse by dyuers wayes, but al the endes are knyt in selynesse of desyre in the perfyte blisse that is suche loue, whan men it haue gotten, there lyueth nothynge more to ben couevted: but howe that desyre of suche perfectyon in my seruyce be kyndely sette in louers hertes, yet her errouyous opinyons mysturne it by falsenesse of wenyng. And although mennes vnderstandynge be mysturned, to knowe whyche shulde ben the way vnto my person, and whyther it abydeth: yet wote they there is a loue in euery wyght, weneth by ỳ thyng that he couevted moste, he shulde come to thylke loue, and that is parfyte blysse of my seruauntes but than fulle blysse may not be, and there lacke anye thynge of that blysse in anye syde. Eke it foloweth than that he that must haue full blysse, lacke no blysse in loue on no syde.

Therfore ladye (q I) tho thylke blysse I haue desyred and for the toforne this my selfe by wayes of ryches, of dignite, of power, and of renome, wenynge me in tho thynges had ben thylke blysse but ayenst the heere it turneth. Whan I supposed beste thylke blysse haue get and come to the ful purpose of your seruyce, sodaynly was I hyndred, and thrown so fer abacke, that me thynketh an impossyble to come there I lefte. I woll well (q she) & therfore hast thou fayled, for thou wentest not by the bye way: a lytel misgoyng in the gynnynge causeth mykyll errour in the ende, wherfore of thylke blysse thou fayledest for hauynge of rychesse, ne none of the other thynges thou nempnedest, nowen nat make suche parfyte blysse in loue as I shall shew. Therfore they be nat worthy to thylke blysse, and yet somwhat muste ben cause and waye to thylke blysse: Ergo there is some suche thyng and some way, but it is lytell in vsage and that is nat openlye yknowe. But what feleste in thyne herte of the seruyce, in whyche by me thou art entred: wenest aught thy selfe yet be in the bye waye to my blysse? I shall so shewe it to the, thou shalte nat con saye the contrary.

Good lady (q I) altho I suppose it in my herte, yet wolde I here thyne wordes, howe ye meanen in this mater. (Quod she) that I shall wyth my good wyl. Thylke blysse desyred, some deale ye knowē, altho it be nat parfytly. for kyndely entention ledeth you therto, but in thre maner lyuenges is all suche ways shewed. Euery wight in this world to haue thys blysse one of thylke thre waves of lyues muste procede, whyche after opynions of great clerkes arn by names cleaped beste allich, resonablich, is vertuous: manliches worldelich, bestialliche is lustes & delytable nothynge restrayned by bydell of reason, all that toyeth and yeueth gladnesse to the herte, and it be ayenst reason, is lykened to bestyall lyueng, whyche thynge foloweth lustes and delytes, wherfore in suche thynge maye nat that precious blysse that is mayster of al vertues abyde. Youre fathers to forne you haue cleaped suche lusty lyuenges after the vnsemly passyons of desyre, whyche are vnmanable to fore god and man bothe. Than after determination of suche wyse, we accorden that suche passyons of desyre shull nat be nempned, but holden for absolute fromme all other lyuenges and prouynges, and so lyueth in to lyuenges manlyche and resonable to declare the maters begonne. But to make the fullye haue vnderstandynge in manlich lyuenges, whyche is holden worldlich in these thynges so that ignorannce be made no letter. I woll (q she) nēpne these forsayd wayes be names and coclusions. First riches, dignyte, renome and power, shull in thys worke be cleped bodily goodes, for in he hath ben a gret throwe mānes trust of selynesse in loue, as in riches, sufficyance to haue mayntayned that was begon by worldly catel in dignite, honour, & reuerēce of hem that werne vnderput by maistry therby to obey. In renome glorie of peo-

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ples playsyng, after lustes in their hert, with out hede takyng to qualite & maner of doing, and in power, by trouth of lordshyps maynteynaunce, thynk to procede forth in doynge. In all whyche thynges a longe tyme mans coueytise in commune hath ben greatly groũded, to come to the blysse of my seruyce, but trewely they were begyled, and for the principall muste nedes fayle and in helpynge mowe nat auaile. Se why for holdest hym not poore that is nedy. Yes parde (q I) And hym for dishonored that moche folke deyne nat to reuerence. That is soth (q I) & what hym that his mightes fayleth and mowe nat helpen. Certes (q I) me semeth of al men he shuld be holden a wretch. And weneste nat (q she) that he that is lytell in renome, but rather is out of the praysynges of mo men thã a fewe be nat in shame. For soth (q I) it is shame and villany to hym that coueyteth renome, that more folke nat praise in name thã preyse. Sothe (q she) thou sayst soth, but all these thynges are folowed of suche maner doynge, & wenden in ryches suffysaunce, in power might, in dignyte worshyp, and in renome glorie, wherfore they discẽded in to disceyuable wening, & in that seruice disceyte is folowed. And thus in general, thou & al such other that so worthe faylen of my blysse that ye longe han desyred, wherfore truly in lyfe of reason is the hye way to thys blysse, as I thynke more openly to declare hereafter. Neuer the later, yet in a lytell to comforte thy herte, in shewyng of what way thou arte entred thy selfe, and that thy Margaryte maye know the set in the hye way, I wol enforme the in this wise. Thou hast fayled of thy first purpose, because thou wentest wronge and lefte the hye way and on thy ryght syde, as thus, thou lokedest on worldly lyueng & that thyng þ begyled, & lightly therfore as a lytel aslay thou songedest, but whan I turned thy purpose, & shewed the parte of the hye waye tho thou abode therin, and no dethe ne ferdnesse of none enemy myst þ out of thilke way reue, but euer one in thyn hert, to come to the like blysse whan thou were arested and fyrst tyme emprisoned, þ were loth to chaunge thy way, for in thy hert thou wendest to haue bẽ there thou shuldest, & for I had routh to sene the miscaried, & wyst wel thyne ablenesse my seruyce to forther & encreasse, I come my selfe wythout other mean to visyt thy person, in comforte of thy hert: and perdy in my cõming thou were greatly gladed, after whiche tyme no disease, no care, no tene, myght moue me out of thy herte. And yet am I gladde and greatly enpited, howe continually thou haddest me in mynde, wyth good auysement of thy conscience, whan thy kyng and his princes by huge wordes and gret, loked after variaunce in thy speche, and euer thou were redye for my sake in pleasaunce of that Margarite peerle, and many mo other, thy bodye to oblyge in to Marces doynge, yf anye contraryed thy lawes, stedfast way maketh stedfast herte wyth good hope in the ende. Trewely I woll that thou it well knowe, for I se the so set and not chaungyng hert haddest in my seruyce, and I made thou haddest grace of thy kynge in forgyuenesse of mykell mysdede: to that gracious kyng arte thou mykell holden, of whose grace and goodnesse somtyme herafter I thynke the enforme, whã I shew the grounde where as morall vertue groweth. Who brought þ to werke. who brought thys grace aboute. who made thy herte hardy. Trewly it was I, for haddest thou of me fayled, than of this purpose had neuer taken in this wyse. And therfore I say thou might well truste to come to thy blysse, sythen thy gynnyng hath ben harde, but euer graciously after thy hertes desyre hath proceded. Syr euer fyned wyth manye heates men knowen for trewe, and safely men may truste to thy aslay in werkynge. This diseases hath proued what waye hence forwarde thou thynkest to holde. Nowe in good fayth ladye (quod I tho) I am nowe in, me semeth it is the hye waye and the ryght. Yea forsoth (quod she) and nowe I wol dysproue thy fyrste wayes, by whyche many men wenen to gette thylke blysse. But for as moche as euery herte that hath caught full loue, is tyed wyth queynte knyttynges, thou shalt vnderstande that loue and thylke forsayd blysse tofore declared in this prouinces, shal hote the knot in the hert well (q I) this inpossession I wol wel vnderstande. Nowe also (q she) for the knotte in the herte muste ben from one to another, and I knowe thy desyre: I woll thou vnderstande these maters to ben sayd of thy selfe in dysprouing of thy fyrst seruyce, & in strengthynge of thylke that thou hast vndertake to

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thy Margaryte perle. I goddes halfe (q I) ryght well I feie that al thys case is possible and trewe, and therfore I admitted al togi-ther. Understāden well (q she) these termes, and loke no contradiction thou graunt.

If God woll (q I) of all these thynges wol I not fayle, and yf I graunt contradic-cyon, I shulde graunte an impossible, & that were a foule inconuenience, for whych thin-ges Ladye ywys hereafter I thynke me to kepe.

Well (quod she) thou knoweste that euerye thynge is a cause wherthrough any thyng hath beynge, that is cleped caused, than yf rychesse causen knotte in herte, thylke rychesse arne cause of thylke precious thyng beyng: but after the sentence of Aristotle, euerye cause is more in dignitie than hys thynge caused, wherthrough it fo-loweth rychesse to bene more in dignitie thā thilke knot, but rychesses arne kindly naugh-ty, badde, and nedy, & thylke knotte is thyng kyndely good, mooste praysed and desyred: Ergo thinge naughtye, badde, and nedye, in kyndelye vnderstandynge is more worthye than thyng kyndely good, most desyred and praysed: the consequence is false, nedes the antecedent mote bene of the same condition. But that rychesses ben badde, naughty, and nedy, ỳ woll I proue, wherfore they mowe cause no such thyng, that is so glorious and good: The more rychesse thou hast, the more nede haste thou of helpe hem to kepe.

Ergo thou nedeste in rychesse, whyche nede thou shuldest not haue yf thou hem wantest. Than must rychesse bene nedy, that in theyr hauinge maken the nedy to helpes in surete thy rychesse to kepē, wherthrough foloweth rychesse to bene nedy. Euery thynge causyng yuels is badde and naughty: but rychesse in one causen mischeef, in another they mowen not euenly stretchē al about. wherof cometh pice, debate, thefte, begrylynges, but rychesse to wynne, whych thynges bene bad, & by ri-chesse arne caused: Ergo thylke rychesses bene badde. whych badnesse & nede bene knytte un-to rychesse by a maner of kyndely propertie, and euery cause and caused accorden, so that it foloweth thylke rychesse to haue the same accordaunce with badnesse & nede, that their cause asketh. Also euery thyng hath hys be-yng by his cause, thā yf ỳ cause be distroyed, the beyng of caused is banyshed: And so if ry-chesse causen loue, & richesse weren distroyed the loue shulde banyshe, but thylke knot and it be trewe maye not banyshe for no gorynge of no richesse: Ergo richesse is no cause of the knotte. And many men as I sayd, setten the cause of the knotte in rychesse, thilke knytten the rychesse, and nothynge the yuell: thylke persons what euer they ben, wenen that ry-chesse is most worthy to he had, & that make they the cause: & so wene they thylke rychesse be better thā the person. Cōmenly such aske rather after the quantyte than after the qua-lyte, and such wenen as well by hem selfe as by other, that connuction of hys lyfe and of hys soule is no more precious, but in as my-kel as he hath of riches. Alas howe maye he holden such thynges precious or noble, that neyther han lyfe ne soule, ne ordynaunce of werchynge lymmes: such richesse bene more worthy whan they ben in gatherynge in de-parting gyueth his loue of other mens pray-syng. And auerice gathering mak-eth to be ha-ted and nedy to many out helpes: and whan leueth the possession of suche goodes, & they gynne vanysh, than entreth sorow and tene in theyr hertes. O badde & straye ben thylke that at theyr departing maketh men rueful and sory. And in the gatherynge of hem make men nedy: Loche folke at dices medlen not togyder moch therof blame. A good gy-ler gad-derth his hoste and al hys meyny but he is a badde gest that maketh his host nedy & to-be-arde of hys geistes goyng. Certes q I me wondreth therfore that the comune opinion is thus: He is worth no more than ỳ he hath in catell. O q she loke thou be not of that o-pinion for yf gold or money, or other maner of richesse shunen in thy sight, whose is that not thyne: & tho they haue a lytle beautye, they be no thyng in cōparison of our kynd, & therfore ye shulde not set your worthinesse in thyng lower thā your self, for the ryches, the fayrenes, the worthines of thylke goodes yf ther be any such preciousnesse in hem are not thine, thou maiest hem so neuer from other they come to the, & to other they shul from ỳ: wherfore embraseth ỳ other wightes goodes as tho they were thine, and hath draw hem by hem self. It is soth the goodes of the erth

bene ordayned in your lode and norysynge, but yf thou wolte holde the apayed wyth ꝑ suffyseth to thy kynde, thou shalte not be in daunger of no such ryches, for kynde sufficeth lytle thynge who that taketh hede. And yf thou wolte algates wyth superfluite of ryches be a throted, thou shalt hastely be anoyed, or elles yuell at ease. And fayrnesse of feldes ne of habitations, ne multytude of meyne, maye not be reken ed as ryches that are thyne owne, for yf they be bad it is great sclaunder and vylany to the occupyer, and yf they be good or fayre, ꝑ mater of the workeman that hem made is to praise. How shuld otherwyse bountie be cõpted for thyne, thilke goodnesse & fayrnesse be proper to the thynges hem selfe, thã yf they be not thyne forow not whã they wend, ne glad the not in pryde and in pryde whan thou hem haste, for their bountie & their beauties cometh out of their owne kynde, and not of thyne owne persone: as fayre bene they in their not hauynge as whan thou haste hem, they be not fayre for thou haste hem, but thou hast geten hem for the fayrnesse of them selfe. And ther the vayllance of men is demed in rychesse out forthe, wenen men to haue no proper good in them selfe but seche it in straunge thynges. trewly the condition of good wenyng is in y myshourned, to wene your noblenesse be not in your selfe, but in the goodes and beautie of other thynges. Parde the beastes that han but selynge soules, haue suffysaunce in their owne selfe: and ye that bene lyke to God, seken encrease of suffysaunce from so excellent a kind of so low thynges, ye do great wrõge to hym that you made lordes ouer all erthly thynges, and ye put your worthynesse under the nombre of the fete of lower thynges and foule, whã ye iuge thylke rychesse to be your worthynesse, than put ye your self by estimacyon vnder thylke foule thynges, and than leue ye the knowyng of your selfe, so be ye vyler thã any dombe beest, ꝑ cometh of shrewde vice. Iuyges so thylke persons ꝑ louen none yuel for dere worthynesse of the person, but for straunge goodes, and sayth the adornement in the knotte lyth in such thing, hys erroure is perylous and shrewde, and be wareth muche benyin with moch welth, & that knot moy not be good whã he hath it getten. Certes thus hath ryches wyth flyckerynge syght anoyed many: & often whan ther is a throw out shrew, he coyneth al the golde, al the precious stones that mo wen be foundē to haue in his bandon, he weneth no wight be worthy to haue such thynges but he alone. How many hast thou knowe nowe in late tyme, ꝑ in their riches supposed suffisaunce haue folowed, & nowe it is al layed: Ye lady (q I) that is for myne medlynge, & otherwyse gouerned thylke rychesse than they shulde. Yee (q she tho) had not the floode greatlye arerysed, and throwe to hem warde both grauel & sande, he had made no medlyng. And ryght as see reuerth flood, so drawerth see ebbe, and pulleth ayen vnder wawe all the fylthe out throwe, but yf good pyles of noble gouernaũce in loue, in wel meanynge maner, bene sadly grounded, to which holde thylke grauel as for a while, ꝑ ayen lightly mow not it turne, & yf the pyles bene trewe, the grauell and sande wol abyde. And certes full warnyng in loue shalte thou neuer thorowe hem gette ne couer ꝑ lightly with an ebbe er thou be ware it wol ayen meue. In rychesse many me haue had teres and diseases, which they shuld not haue had, if ther of they had layed Thorowe whiche nowe declared partly it is shewed, that for rychesse shulde the knotte in herte neyther ben caused in one ne in other: trewly knott maye ben knytte, and I trowe more stedfast in loue though rychesse layed and els in rychesse is the knotte & not in hert. And than such a knotte is falce, whan the see ebbeth & withdraweth the grauel, that such rychesse voydeth, thilke knotte wol vnknytte wherfore no trust no way, no cause, no platfete beyng is in rychesse of no suche knotte, therfore another way must we haue.

HOnoure in dignitie is wened to yeuen a ful knot. Yee certes (q I) & of that opinion bene many, for they saune dignitie, wyth honour and reuerence, causen hertes to encheynen, and so abled to be knytte togyther, for the excellence in soueraynte of such degrees

Nowe (q she) yf dignitie, honour, and reuerence causen thilke knot in herte, this knot is good and profitable. For euery cause of a cause, is cause of thynge caused: Than thus, good thynges and profitable ben by dignitie honour, and reuerence caused. Ergo they ac-

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corden, and dignities bene good wyth reuerences and honoure, but contraryes mowen not accorden: wherfore by reason ther shuld no dignitie, no reuerēce, none honour accord wyth shrewes, but ỳ is false: they haue bene cause to shrewes in many shrewdnesse, for whom they accorden. Ergo frō begynnyng to argue ayenwarde tyl it come to the last conclusyon, they are not cause of the knot. Lo all day at eye, arne shrewes not in reuerence, in honoure, and in dignitie: yes forsoth, rather thā the good. Thā followeth it that shrewes rather thā good shull ben cause of this knot. But of this contrary of al louers is bileued, and for a soth openly determyned to holde.

Nowe (quod I) fayne wolde I here how suche dignities accorden wyth shrewes.

O (quod she) that woll I shewe in many folde wise. Ye wene (quod she) that dignites of office here in your cite is as ỳ sune, it shyneth bryghte wythouten any cloude, whiche thynge whan they comen in the handes of malycyouse tyraunites, there cometh muche harme, and more greuaunce therof, than of the wylde fyre, though it brende all a strete. Certes in dignite of office, the werkes of the occupyer shewen the malice and the badnes in the persoune, wyth shrewes they maken manyfolde harmes, and muche people shamen How often han rancours for malyce of the gouernoure shulde bene mayntenyed Hath not than such dignities caused debate rumours, and ryotes? yes God wote by such thynges haue bene trusted to make in comunes vnderstādyng enclyne to many queynt thynges. Thou wotelle well what I meane. Ye (quod I) therfore as dignitie suche thyng in tene ywrought, so ayenwarde the substaunce in dignitie chaunged, reyued to bringe ayen good plyte in doyng. Do way, do way quod she if it so betyde, but that is selde, that such dignitie is betake in a good mannes gouernaunce. what thynge is to reckon in the dignities goodnesse: parde the bountie & goodnes is hers, that vse it in good gouernaunce, and therfore cometh it that honoure and reuerence shulde bene done to dignitie, because of encreasynge vertue in the occupyer, and no to the ruler, because of souerayntie in dignitie. Sythen dignitie may no vertue cause, who is worthy worshipp for such goodnesse? not dignitie, but person ỳ maketh goodnesse in dignitie to shyne. Thys is wonder thyng (quod I) for me thynketh, as the person in dignitie is worthye honoure for goodnesse so tho a person for badnesse magre hath deserued, yet the dignite leneth to be commended. Let be (quod she) thou erest right foule dignite with badnes is helper to perfourme the felonous doynge: pardy were it kyndly good or any propertie of kyndly vertue hadden in hem selfe, shrewes shulde hem neuer haue, wyth hem shulde they neuer accorde. water and fyre that ben cōtrarious mowen not togyther bene assembled, kynde wol not suffre suche contraryes to ioyne, & sythen at eye by experiēce in doyng, we sene that shrewes haue hem more often thā good mennes, syker mayst thou be, ỳ kyndly good in suche thynges is not appropred. Parde were they kyndly good, as wel one as other shulden euenliche in vertue of gouernaūce ben worthy but one faileth in goodnes another doth the contrary, and so it sheweth kyndly goodnes in dignitie not be grounded. And this same reason (quod she) may be made in gen on all the bodily goodes, for they comen to throw out shrewes. After this he is strong that hath myght to haue great burthens he is lyght and swyfte that hath fouerauntage in rummynge to passe other eyghte so he is shrewe on who shrewde thynges and badde han most wyrchyng. And eyght as philosophy maketh philosophers, & my seruice maketh louers: Eyghte so if dignities weren good or vertuous, they shulde maken shrewes good, and turne her malyce and make hem be vertuous, but that do they not, as it is proued, but cause rancour & debate. Ergo they be not good but vtterly badde. Had Herode to neuer bene Emperoure, shulde neuer his dame haue be slayn, to maken open the prauitie of his engendrure. Herodes for his dignitie he we many chyldre. The dignite of kyng Pompey wolde haue distroyed al Italy Therfore moky wisedome & goodnes both nedeth in a person the malyce in dignitie flyly to hudel, and with a good bytte of arest to withdrawe, in case it wolde praunce otherwise than it shulde: trewly ye yeue to dignities wrongful names in your clepyng. They shulde bete not dignitie, but moultre of badnes & mayntenour of shrewes. Pardy shyne the sune neuer so bryght, & it bringe forth n.

heate, ne seasonably the herbes bryngē out of the erth, but suffre frostes and colde, and the erth barayne to lygge be time of his compas in circute aboute, ye wolde wonder and dispeyse that sumne. If the mone be at full and sheweth no lyghte but derke and dymme to your syghte appereth, and make distruction of ꝑ waters, wol ye not suppose it be vnder cloude or in clips and that some pruy thing vnknowen to your wyttes, is cause of suche contrarious doyng. Thā yf clerkes that han ful insight and knowyng of such impedimētes enforme you of the sothe, bery idiotes ye bene, but yf ye geuen credence to thylke clerkes wordes, & yet it doth me tene, to sene many wretches reioycen in such maner planets Trewly lytle con they on phylosophy or els on my lore, that any desyre hauen such lighteyng planettes in ꝑ wyse any more to shew. Good Ladye qꝑ I tell ye me how ye meane in these thynges. Lo quod she the dignities of your citie, sumne & mone, nothyng in kynd shewe their shynyng as they shulde. For the sumne made no brēnyng hete in loue, but freseth enuye in mennes hertes for feblenesse of shynynge hete: and the mone was about vnder an olde cloude, the lyuenges by waters to distroye.

Lady qꝑ I it is supposed they had shined as they shulde. Yee quod she but nowe it is proued at the full their beaute in kyndly shynynge fayled. Wherfore dignitye of hym selfe hath no beautie in fayrnesse, ne diuerseth nat awaye vices but encreaseth, & so be they no cause of the knot. Nowe se in good trouth holde ye not such sonnes worthy of no reuerence and dignities, worthy of no worshyp, that maketh men to do the more harmes. I not quod I. Yes qꝑ she and thou se a wyse good man, for hys goodnesse and wysenesse wolte thou not do hym worshyp. Therof he is worthy. That is good skyl quod I. it is dewe to suche, both reuerence and worshyp to haue. Than (quod she) a shrewe for hys shrudnesse, all tho he be put forth to some other for ferd, yet is he worthy for shrewdnes to be vnworshypped: of reuerence no part is he worthy to haue, for contrarious doyng belongeth and that is good skyl. For right as besemeth the dignities, thylke same thynge afterwarde hym semeth, or els shulde smite And ouer this thou wost wel (quod she) that fyre in euery place heateth where it be & water maketh wete: why for kyndely werking is so yput in hem to do such thinges: for euery kyndly in werkynge sheweth his kynde. But though a wight had ben mayre of your citie manye wynter togyther, and come in a straunge place ther he were not knowen, he shuld for his dignite haue no reuerence. Thā neyther worshyppe ne reuerence is kyndelye propre in no dignitie, sythen they shulde don their kynde, in such doyng yf any were. And yf reuerence ne worshyppe kyndly be not set in dignities, & they more therin bene shewed thā goodnesse, for that in dignitie is shewed but it prouyth that goodnesse kyndly in hem is not grounded. I wys neyther worshyppe ne reuerence ne goodnesse in dignitie, doone none offyce of kynde, for they haue none such propertie in nature of doynge, but by false opinion of the people. Lo how sometyme thilk that in your citie werne in dignitie noble, yf thou lyst hem nempne, they bene nowe ouerturned bothe in worshyppe, in name, and in reuerence: wherfore suche dignities haue no kyndely werchynge to worshyppe and of reuerence, he that hathe no worthynesse on it selfe. Nowe it ryseth and nowe it vanysheth after the varyaunt opynyon in false hertes of vnstable people. Wherfore yf thou desyre the knotte of thys well, or els yf thou woldest suppose she shuld sette the knotte on the for such maner dignitie than thou weneste beautye or goodnesse of thylke somwhat encreaseth the goodnesse or vertue in the body: But dignitye of hem selfe bene not good, ne geuen reuerence ne worshippe by their owne kynde, howe shulde they than geue to any other a thynge, that by no waye nowe they haue hem selfe. It is sene in dignitie of the Emperour and of many mo other, that they nowe not of hem selue kepe their worshyppe ne their reuerence, that that in a lytle whyle it is now vp and now downe, by vnstedfast hertes of the people. what boote now they geue that wyth cloude lyghtlye leaueth hys shyning. Certes to the occupier is moche ap peyred, sythen such doynge dothe vylany to hym that maye it not maintayne, wherfore thylke waye to the knotte is croked: and yf anye desyre to come to the knotte, he muste leaue thys waye on his lefte syde, or els shal he neuer come there.

Ayayleth

Clayleth ought (ꝙ she) power of myght in mayntenaunce of worthy to come to thys knot Parde (ꝙ I) yee, for hertes bene rauyshed from such maner thynges. Certes (ꝙ she) though a fooles hert is with thing rauished yet therefore is no generall cause of the powers, ne of a syker parfyte herte to be loked after. Was not Nero the moost shrewe one of thylke that men rede, & yet had he power to make senatours, iustices & princes of many landes: was not that great power. Yes, certes (quod I) wel (quod she) yet myght he not help hym selfe out of disease, whā he gan fal. How many ensamples canst thou remēbre of kynges great and noble, and huge power holden, & yet they myghte not kepe hem selue from wretchednesse. Howe wretched was kyng Henry Cutmantyll er he deyede he had not so moch as to couer wh hys membres: and yet was he one of the greatest kinges of al the Normandes ofspryngе, & most possession had. O, a noble thinge and clere is power, that is not founden myghty to kepe hym selfe. Nowe trewly a greate foie is he, that for such thyng wolde sette the knotte in thyne herte. Also power of realmes is not thylk greatest power amonges the worldly powers reknen. And yf such powers han wretchednesse in hem selfe, it folowеth other powers of febler condicion to ben wretched, and than that wretchednesse shulde be cause of such a knotte. But euery wyght that hath reason wote well that wretchednesse by no waye maye bene cause of none such knotte, wherfore such power is no cause. That powers haue wretchednesse in hem selfe, maye ryght lyghtly bene preued. If power lacke on any side, on that side is no power, but no power is wretchednesse: for al be it so the power of emperours or kynges, or els of theyr realmes (whych is the power of the prynce) stretchen wyde and brode, yet besyde is ther moche folke of whyche he hath no cōmaundement ne lordshyp, & ther as lacketh his power, hys nonepower entreth, where vnder springeth that maketh hem wretches. No power is wretchednesse, and nothynge els: but in this maner hath kinges more portion of wretchednesse thā of power. Trewly such powers bene vnmyghty, for euer they ben in drede howe thylke power frō lesinge may be keped of sorowe, so drede sorily pinckes euer in their hertes: litle is ỳ power which careth & ferdeth it selfe to maintayn. Unmyghty is ỳ wretchednes whych is entred by the ferdful wenyng of the wretch him selfe: & knotte ymaked by wretchednesse is betwene wretches, & wretches all thyng be wayled: wherfore the knotte shulde be bewayled, and ther is no such perfyte blysse that we supposed at the gynning. Ergo power in nothing shulde cause such knottes. wretchednesse is a kynde propertie in suche power, as by waye of drede, whiche they mowe not eschewe ne by no waylyue in sikernesse. For thou wost wel (ꝙ she) he is nought mighty that wold doone ỳ he may not doone ne perfourme. Therfore (quod I) these kynges and lordes that han suffysaunce at the ful of men and other thinges, mowen well bene holden myghty: ther cōmaundemētes ben done, it is neuermore denied. Foole (ꝙ she) or he wot him selfe myghty or wotte it not: for he is nought myghty that is blynde of his might and wote it not. That is for the (quod I). Than yf he wot it he must nedes ben a drad to leten it. Or that wot of his might is in dout ỳ he may nedes lese, & so leadeth hym drede to ben vnmyghty. And yf he recche not to lese, lytle is that worth ỳ of ỳ lesyng reken recheth nothing & if it were myghty in power or in strength the lesyng shulde bene wythset, and whan it cometh to the lesyng he may it not withset. Ergo thylke myght is leude and naughty. Such mightes arne ylike to postes and pyllers that vpbeaght stonden, and greate might han to beare many charges, & yf they crooke on any syde, lytell thynge maketh hem ouerthrow. Thys is a good ensāple (ꝙ I) to pyllers & postes ỳ I haue seneouerthrowed myselfe, and hadden, they bene vnderput wyth any helpes, they had not so lyghtly fal. Thā holdeste thou hym mighty that hath manye men armed and many seruauntes, and euer he is adradde of hem in his herte, and for he gasteth hem, somtyme he mote ỳ more feare haue. Comenly he that other agasteth, other in hym ayenwarde werchen the same: and thus warnyshed mote he be, and of warnish the houre drede: Lytel is that myght & right leude, who so taketh hede. Than semeth it (ꝙ I) that such famulers about kinges and

greate lordes, shulde great myght haue. Although a sypher in augrym haue no myght in signifycation of it selfe, yet he yeueth power in signification to other, and these clepe I the helpes to a post to kepe hym from falsynge. Certes (quod she) thylke skyles bene leude. why but yf ꝑ shoters ben wel grounded, the helpes shulden syden and suffre the charge to fal, her myght lytle auayleth. And so me thynketh (quod I) that a poste alone stondynge vpright vpon a basse, may lenger in great burthen endure, than croken pilers for all theyr helpes, and her grounde be not syker. That is soth (ꝙ she) for as the blynde in bearynge of the lame gynne stombie, both shulde fal, right so such pylers so enuyroned wyth helpes in fallynge of the grounde fayleth altogyther, how ofte than suche famulers in theyr mooste pryde of prosperyte bene sodaynly ouerthrowen. Thou haste knowe many in a moment so feete ouerthrow, that couer might they neuer, whan the heuynesse of suche fayrynge cometh by case of fortune, they mowe it not eschewe: and myghte and power, yf there were any, shulde of strength such thynges voyde & weyue, and so it is not. Lo than whiche thynge is this power, that thoymen han it they bene agast, & in no tyme of full hauyng be they syker, & yf they wolde weyue dede, as they mowe not, lytle is in worthynesse. Fye therfore on so naughtye thynge any knot to cause. Lo in aduersitie, thylke bene his foes that gloied and semed frendes in welthe: thus arne hys famylyers his foes and his enemyes: and nothynge is werse ne more myghty for to anoy than is a familier enemye, & these thynges maye they not weyue: so trewelye theyr myghte is not worth a cresse. And ouer al thing, he ꝑ maye not wythdrawe the bridell of hys fleshly lustes and hys wretched complaintes (nowe thinke on thy selfe) trewly he is not mighty. I can se no waye ꝑ lyeth to the knot. Thylke people thā that setten theyr herres vpō suche myghtes and powers, often bene begyled. Warde he is not myghty that maye do anye thing, that another may done him the selue and that mē haue as great power ouer hym as he ouer other. Iustice that demeth men, ayenwarde hath bene often demed. But Nero slewe his gestes, and he was slaine of Perseus his geste, Pugest betrayshed many men, and of Collo was he betrayed. He that with swerde smyteth, with swerde shall be smytten. Than gan I to studyen a while on these thinges, and made a countenaunce with my hande in maner to bene burthe. Nowe lette sene (quod she) me thynketh somwhat there is wythin thy soule, that troubleth thy vnderstandynge, saye on what it is. (Quod I tho) me thynketh that although a mā by power haue suche myghte ouer me, as I haue ouer other, that displeaseth no myght in my person, but yet may I haue power & myght neuer the later. Be nowe (ꝙ she) thine owne leudnesse: he is myghty that may wythout wretchednes, and he is vnmyghty that may it not withstande: but then he that might ouer the, & he woll put on the wretchednesse, thou might it not wythsytte. Ergo thou seest thy selfe what foloweth. But nowe (quod she) wolde'st thou not shame & thou se a flye han power to done harme to another flye, & thin haue no myght ne aventuringe him selfe to defende. Yes certes (quod I) who is a frayler thyng (quod she) than the fleshly bodye of a man, ouer whyche haue often tyme flyes, and yet lasse thyng than a flye, moste might in greuaunce and anoyenge withouten any withsyttyng, for al thylke mannes mightes And sythen thou seest thy fleshlye bodye in kyndely power fayle, how shulde thā the accident of a thing ben in more surete of beyng than substancial wherfore thylke thinges ꝑ we clepe power, is but accident to the fleshly body, and so they may not haue that surete in might, which wanteth in the substancial body, why there is no waye to the knot, that loketh aright after the hye way as he shulde

VErily it is proued that richesse, dignite, & power, ben not trew way to the knot, but as rath by such thynges the knotte to be vnbounde: wherfore on these thynges I rede no wight trust, to gette anye good knotte. But what shul we saye of renome in the peoples mouthes, shulde ꝑ ben any cause: what supposest ꝑ in thine bert. Certes (quod I) yes I trow, for your fyr reasons I dare not fayly it say. Than (ꝙ she) wol I preue ꝑ shrewes as rath shul ben in ꝑ knot as the good & ꝑ were

ayenst

avenst kynde. Fayne (quod I) wolde I that here, me thynketh wondre howe renoume shoulde as wel kuyt a shrewe as a good person: renoume in euery degree hathe auaunced, yet wist I neuer the contrary: shuld thā renoume accorde with a shrewe? it may not synke in my stomacke tyll I heare more.

Howe quod she haue I not sayd alwayes the shrewes shull not haue the knot. what nedeth (quod I) to rehersse that anye more? I wote well euery wyght by kyndely reason, shrewes in kuyttyng wol eschewe. Than (q she) the good ought thylke knotte to haue.

Howe els (quod I) It were greate harme (quod she) that the good were weyued and put out of espoire of the knot, yf it be desired. O (q I) alas, on suche thynge to thynke I wene that heuen weepeth to se suche wrōges here bene suffred on erth: the good ought it to haue and no wyght els. The goodnesse (q she) of a person may not ben knowe outforth but by renoume of the knowers, wherfore he must be renowned of goodnesse to come to the knot. So must it be (q I) or els all lost that we carpen. Sothly (q she) that were great harme, but yf a good man might haue his desyres in seruyce of thylke knot, and a shrewe to be berued, and they ben not knowen in general but by lackyng and prayssyng and in renome, and so by the cōtrequete it folowyth a shrewe to ben prayssed & knyt, and a good to be forsake and vnkuyt. Ah (q I) tho haue ye ladye bene here abouten, yet wolde I se by grace of our argumentes better declared, how good & bad do accorde by lackyng and prayssyng, me thynketh it ayēst kynde. Nay (q she) and that shalt thou se as yerne: these elementes han cōtrarious qualities in kynde, by whiche they mowe not accorde nomore than good & bad, and in qualities they accorde, so that contraryes by qualitie accorden by qualitie. Is not erth drye, & water that is nerre and bytwene therth is wete: drye and wete ben contrary, & mowen not accorde, & yet this discordaunce is bound to accorde by cloudes, for bothe elementes ben colde. Wyght so the eyre that is nerr the water is wete, and eke it is hote. Thus eyre by his hete contraryeth water that is colde, but thylke contraryoultye is oned my moysture, for both be they moyst. Also the fyre ỳ is nerr the eyre, and it encloseth al about, is drye: wherthrough it contraryeth eyre that is wete: & in hete they accorde, for both they ben hote. Thus by these accordaūces, discordaūtes ben ioyned, and in a maner of accordaunce they accorden by connection, that is kuyttyng togyther: of that accorde cōmeth a maner of melody ỳ is wyght noble. Wyght so good and bad are contrarye in doinges, by lackyng and prayssyng: good is both lacked and prayssed of some, and bad is both lacked and prayssed of some: wherfore they? contrariousite accorde both by lackynge and prayssyng. Than folowyth it, though good be neuer so mokel prayssed, oweth more to be knit than the bad: or els bad for the renome that he hath, must be take as wel as ỳ good, and that oweth not. Notforth (q I) wel, q she than is renome no way to the knot: Lo fole (q she) howe clerkes writen of suche glorye of renome. O glorie, glorie, thou arte none other thynge to thousandes of folke, but a great swellet of eares. Many one hath had full greate renoume by false opynion of tyraunt people: And what is foulet tha folke wrongfully to ben prayssed, or by malyce of the people gyltelesse lacked: nedes shame folowyth therof to hem ỳ with wronge prayseth, and also to the desertes prayssed, and villanye and reprofe of hym that disclaudreth.

Good chylde (quod she) what echeth suche renome to the conscience of a wyse man that loketh and measureth his goodnesse, not by fleuelesse wordes of the people, but by sothfastnesse of conscience by god nothyng. And if it be fayre a mans name be eched by moch folkes prayssyng, and foulet thynge that mo folke not prayssen. I sayde to the a lytle here beforne, that no folke in straunge countries nought prayssen, suche renoume may not comen to theyr eares, bycause of vnknowyng and other obstacles, as I sayde: wherfore more folke not prayssen, and that is eyghte foule to hym that renome desyreth, to wete lesse folke prayssen than renoume enhaunce. I trowe the thanke of a people is nought worth in remembraunce to take, ne it proceedeth of no wyse iudgement, neuer is it stedfast perdurable: it is beyne and flyng, with wynde wasteth and encreaseth.

Truly such glorye ought to be hated. yf gentylesse be a clere thyng, renome and glory to enhaūce, as in reseruyng of thy lynage

than is gentyllesse of thy kynne, for why, it semeth that gentylesse of thy kynne, is but prayesynge and renoume that come of thyne auncestres desertes: and yf so be that prayesynge and renoume of theyr desertes, make theyr clere gentylesse, than mote they nedes ben gentyl for theyr gentil dedes, & not þ: for of thy selfe commeth not suche manet gentylesse, prayesynge of thy desertes. Than gentylesse of thyne auncesters that forayne is to the, maketh the not gentyl, but vngétyl and reproued, and yf thou contynuest not theyr gentylesse. And therfore a wyse man ones sayde. Better is it thy kynne to bene by the gentryed, than thou to gloufy of thy kynnes gentylesse, and haste no deserte therof thy selfe.

How passyng is the beautie of fleshly bodyes more flyttyng than mouable floures of sommer. And yf thyne eyen were as good as the Lynx, that may sene thorowe many stone walles, both fayre and foule in theyr entrayles, of no manet hewe shoulde appere to thy syght that were a foule syght. Than is fayrenesse by febleesse of eyen, but of no kynde, wherfore thylke shoulde be no waye to the knot: whan thylke is went the knotte wendeth after.

Lo nowe at all proues, none of all these thynges nowe perfective ben in vnderstandyng, to ben way to the buryng bysse of the knot. But nowe to conclusyon of these matters, herkeneth these wordes. Very sommer is knowe from the wynter: in shorter cours drawyth the dayes of Decebre, than in the moneth of June: The sprynges of May faden and folowen in October. These thynges ben not vnbounden from theyr olde kynde, they haue not lost her werke of their propre estate. Men of volutacious wyll, withsyt þ henens gouernyth. Other thynges suffren thynges pacyently to werche: Man in what estate he be, yet wolde he bene chaunged. Thus by queynt thynges bysse is deyzed, and the fruite that cometh of these sprynges, nys but anguysh and bytter, although it be a whyle swete, it may not be withholde, hastely they departe: thus al daye fayleth thynges that fooles wende. Wyght thus haste thou fayled in thy fyrste wenynge. He that thinketh to sayle and drawe after the course of the starre, de polo antartico, shall be neuer come northwarde to the contrary starre of polus articus: of whiche thinges yf thou take kepe, thy fyrst out waye gouge, pyrson and eryie maye be cleped. The grounde falsed vnderneth, and so haste thou fayled. No wyght I wene blameth hym that stynteth in misgoing, and secheth redye waye of hys bysse. Nowe me thynketh (quod she) that it sufficeth in my shewynge the wayes, by dignitie, rychesse, renoume, and power, if thou loke clerely, arne no wayes to the knotte.

Clerye argument ladye (quod I tho) that ye han maked in these fore nempned matters, me thynketh hem in my full wytte conceyued, shall I nomore yf god wil in the contrary be begyled But fayne wolde I and it were your wyll, bysse of the knotte to me were declared, I myght sele the better how myne hert myght assente to pursue the ende in seruyce, as he hath begone. Quod she there is a melody in heuen, which clerkes clepen armonye, but that is not in breakynge of voyce, but it is a manet swete thynge of kyndly werchynge, that causeth tone out of nombre to reken, & and that is tayned by reason and by wysedome, in a quantitie of proporcyon of knyttyng. God made all thynge in reason and in wytte of proporcyon of melodye, we mowe not sufficyse to shewe. It is wryttē by great clerkes and wyse, that in eartbly thynges lyghtly by studye and by trauayle, the knowynge maye be getten but of suche heuenly melodye, moteil trauayle wol bringe out in knowyng tyght lytle. Swetnesse of this paradyse hath you rauyshed, it semeth ye slepen, resled from all other diseases, so kyndly is your hertes therin ygrounded. Bysse of two hertes in full loue knyt, may not aright ben ymagyned: euer is theyr contemplacion in full of thoughty studye to pleasaunce, mater in bryngyng, comforte euerych to other. And therfore of erthly thynges moteil mater lyghtly commeth in your lernynge. knowledge of vnderstondynge that is nygh after eye, but not so nygh the couetyse of knyttynge in your hertes: Your souerayne desyre hath euery wyght in lytle hearynge of

heuen-

heuenly conning, than of mokell materyall purposes in earth. Right so it is in proper-tie of my seruauntes, that they ben more af-fected in sterynge of lytle thynge in his de-syre, than of mokell other mater, lasse in his conscience. This blysse is a maner of sowne delicious, in a queynt voyce touched, and no dynne of notes: there is none impressyon of breakynge labourc. I can it not otherwyse nempne, for wantynge of prouue wordes, but Paradyse terrestrye full of delicyous melodye withouten trauayle in sowne per-petual seruice in full ioy couered to endure.

Onely kynde maketh hertes in vnder-stan-dyng, so to slepe, that otherwyse may it not be nempned, ne in other maner names for-ly kynd wetnesse can I not it declare, al sugre and hony, all mynstralsye and melodye ben but soote and galle in comparis̄ by no ma-ner proporcyon to recken, in respecte of thys blyssfull loue. This armonye, this melodye, this perdurable loue may not be in dounge, but betwene heuens and elementes, or twey kyndly hertes, ful knyt in trouth of natural vnderstondyng, withouten wemyng and dis-ceyte, as heuens and planettes, which thin-ges contynually for kyndely accordaunces, forseteth all contrarious meanynges that into passyue diseases may sowne, euermore it thryueth after more werkyng. These thin-ges in proporcyon be so well ioyned, that it vnborth all thyng, which into badnesse by a-ny wave may be accompted. Certes (q I) this is a thynge precious and noble. Alas, that falsenesse euer or wantrustе shoulde be mayntayned this loue to voyde. Alas that euer any wretche shulde thorowe wrath or enuy, tanglyng dare make to shoue this me-lody so farre abacke, that openly dare it not ben vsed: truly wretches ben fulfylled with enuy and wrath, and no wight els. Flebyng and tales in suche wretches shall appeare o-penly in euery wrythes ere, with ful mouth so charged, mokell malyce moued many in-nocentes to shende, god wold they were soule ther with wrethe tangled. Lo, trouth in this blysse is hyd, and ouer all vnder couert hym bydeth: he dare not come a place for way-tyng of shrewes.

Comenly badnesse, goodnesse amastryeth with my selfe and my soule this loue wolde I hyde, yf I the goodnesse were as mochc as the nobley in melody. O (q she) what good-nesse may be accompted more in this mate-ryall worlde, truly none that shalt thou vn-derstonde. Is not euery thyng good that is contrariant and destroying euyll. Howe els (q I) Enuy, wrath, and falsenesse ben gene-rall (q she) and that wote euery man bringe in his ryght mynde, the knotte the whiche we haue in this blysse, is contrayaunt and distroyeth such maner euils: ergo it is good.

What hath caused any wyght to don any good dede. Fynde me anye good, but yf this knotte be the chefe cause: Nedes mote it be good, that causeth so many good dedes.

Euery cause is more and worthyer than thyng caused, and in that mores possessyon, all thynges lesse ben compted. As the kynge is more than his people, and hath in posses-syon all his realme after: Right so the knot is more than all other goodes, thou myght recken all thynges lasse, and that to hym lo-geth, oweth into hys mores cause of wor-shyppe and of wyll do tourne, it is els rebell and out of his mores defendynge to voyde. Right so of euery goodnesse into the knotte and into the cause of his worshyp oweth to turne. And truly euerye thyng that hath be-inge profytably is good, but nothynge hath to ben more profytably than this knot: kyn-ges it mayntayneth, and hem theyr powers to mayntayne: It maketh mysse to ben ame-ded with good gouernaunce in dounge. It closeth hertes so togyther, þ rancour is out thrested. who that it lengest keepeth, lengest is gladded. I trowe (q I) heretykes and mysmeanynge people hence forwarde woll mayntayne this knotte, for there throughe shall they ben mayntayned, and vtterly wo-tourne and leaue theyr olde euyll vnder-stond-yng and knytte this goodnesse, and profer so farre in seruyce, that name of seruauntes myght they haue.

Theyr tangles shal ceasse, me thynketh be lacketh mater now to alege. Certes (q loue) yf they of good wyll thus tourned as thou sayest wolen truly perfourme, yet shul they be abled partye of this blysse to haue: & they woll not, yet shull my seruauntes the werre well susteyne in myne helpe of mayntinaunce to the ende. And they for theyr good trauayl shullen in rewarde so be ben meoed, that end lesse ioye bodye and soule togyther in this

shullen

shullen abyden, there is euer action of blysse withouten possible corruption, there is action perpetuell in werke withoute trauayle, there is euerlastyng passyng, withouten any of labour, continuel plyte without seasynge coueted to endure. No tonge may tel ne hert maye thynke the leest poynte of this blysse. God bryngе me thyder (q I than). Contynueth well (q she) to the ende, and ꝑ myght not fayle than, for thoughe thou spede not here, yet shal the passyon of thy martred life ben wrytten and rad to forne the greate Jupyter that god is, of routh, an hygh in the holownesse of heuen, there he syt in his trone: & euer thou shalt forwarde ben holden amóge all these heuens for a kuyght, that myghtest with no penaunce bene discomfyted. He is a very martyr that lyuyngiye goinge is gnawen to the bones. Certes (q I) these bene good wordes of comfort, a lytle myne herte is reioysed in a mery wyse. Ye (q she) and he that is in heuen seketh more loye, than whā he first herde therof speke. So it is (quod I) but wyst I the forthe, that after disease comfort wolde folowe with blysse, so as ye haue often declared, I wolde well suffre this passyon with the better chere, but my thought full sorowe is endelesse, to thynke how I am cast out of a welfare, & yet dayneth not this cuyll none herte none hede to mewarde thorowe, which thynges wolde greatly me by wayes of comfort disporte, to weten in my selfe a lytle with other men ymoned: and my sorowes persen not in her balaunce the weyght of a pese: & lyuinges of her daunger so heuyly persen, they drawe my causes so hyghe, that in her eyen they semen but lyght and ryght lytle.

O, for (q she) heuen with skyes that foule cloudes maken and darke wethers, wyth great tempestes and huge, maketh the mery dayes with soft shynynge sunnes. Also the yere withdraweth floures & beautye of herbes and of earth. The same yeres maketh spryinges and lolitie in Clere so to remouell with paynted colours, that erth semeth as gaye as heuen. Eyes that blasteth, & with wawes throweth shyppes, of which the lyuyng creatures for great peryll for hem dreden: ryght so the same sees maken smothe waters and golden saylynge, and cōforteth hem to noble hauen that first were so ferde.

Hast thou not (q she) lerned in thy youth, ꝑ Jupyter hath in his warderobe bothe garmentes of loye and of sorowe: what woste thou howe soone he woll tourne of the garment of care, and cloth the in blysse: parde it is not farre fro the. Lo an olde prouerbe alleged by manye wyse: whan bale is greatest, than is bote a nye bote. whereof wryte thou dismaye: hope well and serue well, and that shall the saue, with thy good beleue.

Ye, ye (quod I) yet se I not by reason how this blysse is comyng, I wot it is cōtingent it may fal on other. O (q she) I haue moked to done to clere thyne vnderstandynge and voyde these errours out of thy mynde, I woll proue it by reason thy wo maye not alway enduren. Euery thynge kyndely (quod she) is gouerned, and ruled by the heauenly bodyes, which hauen full werchyng here on earth: & after course of these bodyes all course of youre doinges here bene gouerned and ruled by kynde.

Thou wost wel by course of planettes all your proceden, & to euery of synguler houres be enterchaunged stondmele aboute, by submytted worchyng naturally to suffer, of which chaunges commeth these transitory tymes that maketh reuoluing of your yeres thus stondmele, euery hath full myght of worchyng, tyl al seuen han had her course about. Of which worchynges & possessyon of houres, the dayes of the weke haue take her names, after denominacyon in these seuen planettes. Lo, your sondaye gynneth at the fyrst houre after noone on the saturdaye, in which houre is than the sunne in ful myght of worchynge, of whom sonday taketh his name. Nexte hym folowyth Venus, & after Mercurius, & than the Mone, so than Saturnus, after whom Jouis, & than Mars, & ayen than the Sunne, and so forth be seuen houres togyther, in which houre gynnynge in the second day stant the mone, as master for that tyme to rule, of whom mondaye taketh his name, & this course folowyth of all other dayes generally in doing. This cours of nature of these bodyes chaungynge, stynten at a certayne terme, ywrytted by their fyrst kynde, and of hem all gouernementes in this elemented worlde proceaden, as in spryinges, constellacions, engenduures, and all that folowen kynde and reason, where-

fore

fore the course that foloweth sorowe & ioye: kyndly mosten entrechaungen theyr tymes, so that alway on wele, as alwaye on woo, may not endure. Thus seest thou apertly thy sorowe into wele mote bene chaunged, wherefore in suche case to better syde euermore enclyne thou shuldest. Truly nerre the ende of sorowe anon entreth ioye, by maner of necessitie it wol ne may none other betide and so thy contigence is disproued: yf thou holde this opinyon anye more, thy wytte is ryght leude. wherfore in full conclusyon of all this, thylke Margaryte thou desyriste, hath ben to the dere in thy herte, and for her hast thou suffred many thoughtful diseases hereafter shall be cause of mokell myrth and ioye, and loke how glad canst thou ben, and ease al thy passed heurnesse with manifold ioyes. And than woll I as blythlye here the speken thy myrthes in ioye, as I nowe haue yherde thy sorowes and thy complayntes. And yf I nowe in ought thy ioye encrease by my trouth on my syde shal not be leaued, for no maner trauayle, that I with all my myghtes ryght blythly woll helpe, and euer ben redy you both to plese. And than thanked I that lady with al goodly maner that I worthely coude, and truly I was greatly reioyced in myne hert, of her fayre behestes, and profered me to be slawe in al that she me wolde ordayne whyle my lyfe lested.

METhynketh (q I) that ye haue ryght wel declared that way to y knot shuld not ben in non of these diuersing thinges, & nowe ordre of our purpose this asketh that ye shulde me shewe yf any waye be thyther, and whyche thylke waye shulde ben, so that openly may be sey, the very hye waye in full confusyoun of these other thynges.

Thou shalt (q she) understande, that one of these lyues as I first sayd euery creature of mankinde is sprongen, and so forth proceth. These lyues bene thorowe names departed in thre maner of kyndes, as bestyalyche, manlyche, and resonablyche, of which two bene vsed by fleshlye bodye, and the thyrde by his soule. Bestyall amonge resonables is forboden in euery lawe and euery sect, both in chrysten and other, for euerye wyght dispyseth hem that lyueth by lustes, and delyttes, as hym that is thrall & bounden seruaunt to thynges ryght foule, suche ben counted werse than men, he shall not in theyr degre ben reckened, ne for such one alowed. Heretykes sayne they chosen lyfe celestial, that voluptuously lyuen, so that (as I first sayde to the) in manly and reasonable lyuynges, our mater was to declare, but manly lyfe in lyuyng after flesh or els fleshly wayes to chese, maye not blysse in this knot be conquered, as by reason it is proued.

Wherfore by resonable lyfe he must nedes it haue, syth away is to this knotte. But not by the fyrste tway lyues, wherefore neades more it ben to the thyrde, and for to lyue in flesh but not after flesh, is more resonablych than manliche reckened by clerkes. Therfore how this way commeth in, I wol it blythly declare.

Se now quod she that these bodyly goodes of manlyche lyuynges, yelden sorowful stoundes and smerctande houres, who so wele remembre hym to theyr endes in their worchynges they ben thoughtfull and sory. Ryght as a bee that hath habde his honye, anon at his flyght begynneth to stynge: So thylke bodyly goodes at the last wol away and than stynge they at her gonge, where through entreth and clene voydeth al blysse of this knotte.

Forsoth quod I me thynketh I am wel serued in the wyg of these wordes although I had lytle in respect amonge other greate and worthye, yet had I a fayre parell, as me thought for the tyme, in forthrynge of my fust enaunce, whiche whyle it durede, I thought me hauyng mokell hony to myne estate. I had rychesse sufficeauntly to myne nede, I had dignite to be reuerenced in worshyp. Power me thought that I had to kepe fro myne enemyes, and me semed to shyne in glory of renoume as manhode asketh, in meane, for no wyght in myne admunicacion coude none cuylyne trechetye by sothe cause on me put. Lady your selfe weten wel that of the confederacyes maked by my tocretaynes I nas but a seruaunt and yet mokell meane folke woll fullye auenge treason thilke maters mayntayne, in which meyntenaunce glorye them selfe, and as often ye

hauen

hauen sayde, therof ought nothyng in enyll to be layde to mewardes, sythen as repentaunt I am tourned, and nomore I thynke neyther tho thynges ne none suche other to susteyne, but vtterly destroy without medlynge maner, in all my myghtes. Howe am I nowe caste oute of all swetnesse of blysse, and myscheuously stongen my passed ioye sorowfullye muste I wayle, and lyue as a wretche.

Euery of tho ioyes is turned into his contrary: for rychesse nowe haue I pouertye, for dignitie now am I emprysoned, in stede of power, wretchednesse I suffer, and for glory of renoume I am now dispysed, and soulyche hated: thus hath farne Fortune, that sodaynly am I ouerthrowen, and out of all wealth dispoyled.

Trulye me thynketh this way in entre is ryght harde, god graunt me better grace er it be al passed, þ other way lady me thought ryght swete. Now certes (q Loue) me lyst for to chyde. what ayleth thy darke dulnesse woll it not in clerenesse ben sharped. Haue I not by many reasons to the shewed suche bodily goodes fayren to peue blis, their might so ferforth wol not stretche. Shame (q she) it is to say. thou lyest in thy wordes. Thou ne hast wyst but ryght fewe, that these bodyly goodes had al at ones, commenly they dwellen not togyther. He that plentie hath in richesse, of his kynne is ashamed: another of lynage ryght noble and well knowe, but pouerte him hadleth he were leuer vnknow. An other hath these, but renome of peoples prayseyng maye he not haue ouer al he is hated and defamed of thynges ryght foule.

An other is fayre and semely, but dignite hym fayleth: and he that hath dignite is croked or lame, or els mishappen and foully dispysed: thus pertable these goodes dwellen cõmenlye in one household ben they but seide. Lo how reetched is your trust, on thynge þ wol not accorde. Whe thynketh thou clepest thylke plyte thou were in selynes of fortune and thou sayest for that þ selynesse is departed, thou art a wretche. Than folowth this vpon thy wordes, euerye soule resonable of man, may not dye, and yf death endeth selynesse and maketh wretches, as nedes of fortune maketh it an ende. Than soules after deth of þ body in wretchednesse shuld lyuen.

But we know many that han getten the blysse of heuen after their deth. Howe than may this lyfe maken men blysful, that whã it passeth it peueth no wretchednesse, & manye tymes blysse, yf in this lyfe he con lyue as he shulde? And wolt thou accompt with fortune, that now at the fyrst she hath done the pene and sorow: yf thou looke to the maner of al glad thynges & sorowful, þ mayest not naye it, that yet, and namely nowe thou standest in noble plyt in a good gynnyng, wt good forth gonge hereafter. And yf thou wene to be a wretch for such welth is passed why thã art thou not wel fortunate for bad thynges & angurys wretchednesse bẽ passed. Art thou now come first into the hostrye of this lyfe, or els the booth of this world, art thou now a sodayne gest into this wretched eryle: wenest there be any thing in this erth stable? Is not thy fyrst arest passed þ brought the in mortal sorowe? Ben these not mortal thinges agone with ignorannce of bestiall wyt, and hast receyued reason in knowynge of vertue: what cõfort is in thy hert: the knowynge sykerly in my seruyce be grounded. And wost thou not wel as I sayde, þ death maketh ende of al fortune: what thã stadest thou in noble plyte, lytle hede or rekenynge to take, yf thou let fortune passe dyng, or els that she flye whan her lyst, now by thy lyue. Hardy a mã hath nothyng to lese as his life and for to holde that he doth al his cure and dyligent trauayle. Than saye I, thou arte blissfull & fortunate selye, yf thou know thy goodes that thou hast yet beloued, whiche nothinge maye dout, that they ne ben e more worthy than thy lyfe: what is that (q I)? Good contẽplacion (q she) of well doinge in vertue in tyme coming, both in plesaunce of me & of thy Margaryte perle. Haestly thyne hert in ful blysse with her shalbe ealed. Ther fore dismay the not, fortune in hate greuously ayẽst thy bodily persõ, ne yet to gret tempest hath she not set to þ, sithen þ holding cables & ankres of thy life holden by knytting so fast, that thou discomforte the nought of tyme þ is nowe, ne dispayre the not of tyme to come, but peuen the cõfort in hope of well doing, and of gettyng agayne the double of thy lesynge, wt encreasyng loue of thy Margarite perle therto. For this hytherto þ hast had al her ful daũger, and so thou myght amende

mende all that is mysse, and all defautes that somtyme thou dyddest, and that nowe in all thy tyme to that yke Margarete in full seruyce of my loze thyne herte hath contynued, wherfoze she ought moch the rather enclyne fro her daungerous sete. These thynges ben yet kept by the holdynge anker in thy lyue, & holden mote they: To god I praye all these thynges at full ben perfoumed. Foz whyle thys anker holdeth I hope thou shalte safely escape, and whyle thy trew meanyng seruice aboute bzyng in dispyte of all false meaners that the of newe haten, foz this trew seruyce thou arte nowe entred.

Certayne (q I) amonge thynges I asked a question, which was ꝑ way to the knot. Trewly lady howe so it be, I kept you wyth quellicus and answers, in spekyng of my lyst seruyce, & am now in full purpose in the pricke of the hert, ꝑ thilke seruice was an enpusonmēt, & alway bad & naughty in no maner to be desyred. Nc ꝑ in gettyng of the knot, may it nothyng auayle. A wyse gentyll hert loketh after vertue, & non other bodily loves alone. And bycause tofore this, i tho wayes I was sette, I wote wel my selfe I haue erred, & of the blysse fayled, & so out of my waye hugely haue I ron. Certes (q she) ꝑ is sothe, & there thou hast my swent, eiche w that path fro hens forwarde I rede. Wonder I trewly why the mozt al folke of this worlde seche these wayes outforth, & it is preued in youre selfe. Lo howe ye ben cofounded with errour & folly. The knowyng of very cause & waye is goodnesse & vertue. Is there any thyng to the more precious than thy selfe? Thou shalt haue in thy power, ꝑ thou woldest neuer lese and that in no way may be taken fro the, and thilk thyng is that is cause of this knot. And yf dethe mow it nat reue more thā an erthly creature, thilke thing than abydeth with thy selfe soule, & so our conclusion to make suche a knot thus getten, abydeth with this thyng & with the soule, as long as they last, a soule dieth neuer, vertue & goodnesse euermore wh ꝑ soule endureth, & this knot is pertue blysse. Thā this soule in this blysse endlesse shal endure. Thus shul hertes of a trewe knot ben rased: thus shul there soules be pleased: thus perpetually in ioye shul ther synge. In good trouth (q I) here is a good begynnyng, yeue vs more of this way. (Quod she) I sayd to ꝑ nat longe sythen, that resonable lyfe was one of thre thynges, & it was proued to the soule. euery soule of reason hath two thynges of sterynge lyfe, one in vertue and another in the bodily worksynge: and whan the soule is the maister ouer the body, than is a man maister of hym selfe: & a mā to be a maister ouer hym selfe, lyueth in vertue and in goodnesse, & as reson of vertue techeth, so the soule & the body worchyng vertue togider lyuen resonable lyfe, which clerkes clepen felycite in lyuyng, and theryn is the hye way to this knot. Here olde philosophers that hadden no knowyng of diuyne grace of kyndly reason alone, wenden that of pure nature, wythoutē any helpe of grace, me might haue yshoued thother lyuenges, resonably haue I lyued: and for I thynke hereafter, yf god woll, & I haue space) thylk grace after my lewde knowyng declare: I leaue it as at thys tyme. But (as I sayd) he that outforth loketh after ꝑ wayes of this knotte, conuyng with which he shulde know the way inforth stepeth for the tyme, wherfore he that wol this way knowe must leue the loking after false wayes outforth, & the eyen of hys conscience and vnclose hys herte. Seest nat he that hath trust in the bodily lyfe is so besy bodily woundes to amende in kepynge fro me, (wer all out may they nat be healed) that of woundes in hys true vnderstandynge he taketh no hede. The knowynge euenforth stepeth to harde but anone as in knowyng a wake, than gynneth he prey vy medicines for healyng of his trewe entes, inwardes lightly healeth conscience yf it be wel handled. Than must nedes these wayes come out of the soule by sterynge fro the body, & els maye no man come to perfyte blysse of this knotte: and thus by this waye he shal come to the knot, and to the perfyte felycite that he wende haue had in bodilye goodes outforthe. Yea (q I) shall he haue bothe knotte, riches, power, dignite, and renome in this maner waye. Ye (q he) ꝑ shall I shewe the I se he nat riche that hath sufficiaunce and hath the power that no man may amaistrie? Is nat gret dignite to haue worshyp and reuerēce? & hath he nat glorie of renome whose name perpetuall is durynge and out of nom-

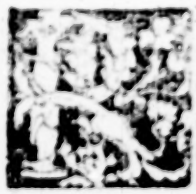
bye in comparation. These be thynges that men wenen to getten out forth (q I). Ye (q she) they that loken after a thyng that nought is therof in al ne in partie, longe nowe they gapen after: That is soth (q I:) therfore (q she) they that sechen gold in grene trees, and wene to gader precyous stones amonge vynes, and layne her nettes in mountaynes to fysh, & thynke to hunt in depe sees after hart & hynde, and sechen in erth thylke thynges that surmounteth heuen, what may I of hem say, but folysshe ignoraunce mysledeth wandrying wrecches by vncouth wayes that shulden be forleten, and maketh hem blynde fro the eyght path of trewe way that shuld ben vsed. Therfore in generall errour in mankynde, departeth thylke goodes by myssechynge, whyche he shulde haue hole and he sought by reason. Thus gothe he begyled of that he sought, in hys hode men haue blowe a tape. Nowe (q I) yf a man be vertuous & all in vertue lyueth, howe hathe he all these thynges? That shall I prouen (q she) what power hathe anye man to let another of lyuyng in vertue, for prisonment or any other distresse, he taketh it patiently, discouereth he nat, the tyraunt ouer hys soule no power maye haue. Than hathe that man so tourmented suche power, that he nyll be discomfit, ne ouercome may he nat ben, sythen patience in hys soule ouercometh, and as nat ouercomen. Suche thyng that may nat be a maistred, he hath nede to nothyng, for he hath sufficiaunce ynowe to helpe him selfe. And thylke thyng that thus hath power and sufficiaunce, & no tyrant may it reue, & hath dignyte to sette at nought all thynges, here it is a great dignite that deth may a maistry. Wherfore thilk power sufficiaunce so enclosed wyth dignyte, by all reson renome must haue. Thys is thylke ryches vb sufficiaunce ye shulde loke after, thys is thilke worshipful dignite ye shulde couet, this is thylke power of myght, in whyche ye shulde truste, this is the like renome of glorie that endeles endureth, and all nys but substaunce in vertuous lyueng. Certes (q I) all thys is sothe, & so I se well that vertue with ful gripe encloseth al these thiges. Wherfore in sothe I may saye, by my trouth, vertue of my Margarite brought me first in to your seruice, to haue knytting with that iewel nat so dayn longinges ne folkes fynale wordes, but onely our cõuersation togider: & thã I seinge thentent of her trewe menyng vb flourishyng vertue of patience, that she vsed nothynge in yuel, to quyte the wicked tealynges that false tonges ofte in her haue layde, I haue sey it my selfe, goodlye forzeuenesse hathe sprongе out of her herte, vnite and accorde aboue all other thynges she desyreth in a good meke maner, and suffereth many wicked tales.



Trewly lady t[illegible] it were a gret worshipp, [illegible]at such thynges by due chastysment were amended. Yea (q she) I haue the excused, al suche thynges as yet mowe nat be redressed thy Margarytes vertue I commende well the more that pacientlye such anoyes suffreth. Dauid kynge was meke and suffred mokell hate and manye yuell speches: no dispyte ne shame that his enemis him deden, myght nat moue patience out of hys herte, but euer in one plyte mercy he vsed. Wherfore god hym selfe toke reward to the thynges, and therto suche punysshement let fall. Trewly by reason it ought be enlample of drede to all maner peoples myethe. A man vengeable in wrathe no gouernaunce in punishment ought to haue. Plato had a cause hys seruaunt to scoure, and yet cleaped he hys neyghbour to performe the doynge, hym selfe wolde nat, lest wrath had hym a maistred, & so might he haue layde on to moche: euermore grounded vertue shewth thentent fro wythin, & trewly I wott well for her goodnesse and vertue, thou hast desyred my seruice to her pleasance well the more, and thy selfe therto fully haste profered. Good lady (q I) is vertue the hye waye to thys knot, that long we haue yhaunted ye for sothe (q she) and wythout vertue goodlye thys knotte maye nat be goten. Ah nowe I se (quod I) howe vertue in me fayleth, and I as a seer tre wythout burionyng or frute alwaye welke, & so I stonde in dysperyte of thys noble knotte, for vertue in me hathe no maner worksynge. I wyde where about haue I trauayled. Peace (q she) of thy first way thy trauayle is in vdel, and as touchynge the seconde way, I se well thy meanyng. Thou woldest cõclude me yf thou couldest, bycause I brought the to seruice, and euery of my seruãtes I helpe to come to this

blysse,

blysse, as I sayd here before: & thou saydest thy selfe, thou myghtest nat be holpe as thou wenyst, because that vertue in the sayleth, & thys blysse perfytly without vertue may nat be goten, thou weenest of these wordes contradiction to folowe. Parde at the hardest I haue no seruaunt but he be vertuous in dede and thoughe I brought the in my seruyce, yet arte thou nat my seruaunt: but I say, thou myght so werche in vertue hereafter, that thā shalt thou be my seruaunte, and as for my seruaunt acompted. For habyt maketh no moke ne wearynge of gylte spurres maketh no knyght. Neuer the later, in confort of thyne herte, yet wol I otherwyse answere. Certys lady (q I) tho so ye must nedes, or els I had myghe caught suche a cordiacle for sorowe, I wotte it well I shulde it neuer haue recouered. And therfore nowe I praye to enforme me in this, or els I holde me wythout recouerye. I may nat longe endure tyll thys lesson be lerned, and of this myschefe the remedy knowen. Nowe (q she) be nat wrothe, for there is no man on lyue that may come to a precious thynge longe coueyted, but he somtyme suffre tenefull diseases, and wenyst thy selfe to ben vnlyche to all other that may nat ben: And with the more sorowe that a thyng is getten, the more he hathe loye, the lyke thynge after wardes to kepe, as it fareth by chyldren in schole that for lernynge arne beaten, wha̅ they lesson they forgetten, commely after a good disciplynyng with a yerde they kepe ryght wel doctryne of theyr schole.



Ight with these wordes, on thys lady I threwe vp myne eyen to se her countenaunce and her chere, and she aperceyuynge thys fantasye in myne herte, gan her semblaut goodly on me caste, and sayde in this wyse.

It is well knowe, bothe to Reason and experience in doyng, euery actyue worcheth on hys passyue, and whan they ben togider, actyue and passyue ben ycleaped by these philosophers, yf fyre be in place chafynge thynge able to be chafed or hete, and thylke thynges ben sette in suche a distaūce that the one may werche, the other shall suffre. Thylke Margarite thou desyrest is ful of vertue, and able to be actyue in goodnesse: but euery herbe sheweth his vertue outforthe from within, the sonne yeueth lyght that thynges may be sey. Euery fyre heteth thylke thyng yt it neyghed and it be able to be hete, vertue of this Margarite outforth wrethe, and nothyng is more able to suffre worchyng or worke catch of the actyfe, but passyfe of the same actyfe, and no passyfe to vertues of thys Margaryte, but yt in all my doue̅r can I fynde, so that her vertue must nedes on the werche, in what place euer thou be, within distaūce of her worthynesse, as her very passyfe thou arte closed: but vertue may the nothyng profyte, but thy desyre be performed and all thy sorowes ceased. Ergo through werchynge of her vertue thou shalte safely ben holpen and drawn out of all care, and welcome to this longe by the desyred. Lady (q I) thys is a good lesson in gyuynyng of my loye: but wete ye wel forsothe, though I suppose she haue moche vertue, I wolde my spousayle were proued, and than may I lyue out of doute, and reioyce me greatly in thynkyng of the vertues so shewed. I herde the say (quod she) at my beginnyng whan I receyued the fyrste for to forgo that thy iewel thylke Margarite thou arest was closed in a muskle with a blewe Forsothe (q I) so I sayd, and so it (q she) euery thyng kyndely sheweth thys iewel closed in a blewe fuel, of coloures sheweth vertue fro̅ and so euery wight shulde rather loke propre vertue of thynges that to hys goodes. If a thynge be engendred of matter, comenly and for the more parte folweth after the congelement vertue fyrste matter, and it be not corrupt with ces, to procede with encrease of good vertues eke right so it fareth of babde. Trewly great excellence in vertue of lynage, for the more parte discendeth by kynde to the succession vertues to folowe. Wherfore I saye, the colours of euery Margarite sheweth fro̅ with in the fynesse in vertue. Kyndely heuen whan mery wether is a lofte, apereth in mānes eye of coloure in blewe, stedfastnesse in peace betokenyng within and without: Margaryt is engendred by heuenly dewe, & sheweth in it selfe by fynenesse of coloure, whether the engendrure were maked on morowe or on euen: thus sayth kynd of this pretie. This precious

Margaryte that thou seruest, sheweth it self dyscended by nobley of vertue from thys heuenlych dewe, nouryshed and congeled in mekenesse, that mother is of all vertues, and by werkes that men sene without en the signyfication of the coloures ben shewed mercy and pytie in the herte wyth peace to al other, and all thys is yclosed in a muskle, who so redily these vertues loke. All thyng that hath soule is reduced in to good by meane thynges, as thus: In to god man is reduced by soules resonable, and so forthe beestes or bodyes that mowe not mouen, after place ben reduced in to manne, by beestes meue that mouen from place to place: so that thylke bodyes that han felynge soules, and mowe not from places, holde the lowest degree of soulynge thynges in felynge, and suche ben reduced in to man by meanes. So it folowyth, the muskle as mother of al vertues, halte the place of mekenesse to hys lowest degree discendeth downe of heuen, and there by a maner of virgyne engendure arne these Margarites engendred and afterwarde congeled. Made not mekenesse so low the hye heuen to enclose & catche out therof so noble a dewe, that after cogrement a Margaryte wyth endeletle vertue & euerlastyng ioy was wyth full vessell of grace yeuen to euery creature, that goodlye wolde it receyue. Certes (q I) these thynges ben ryght noble, I haue er this herde these same sawes. Than (q she) thou wotte well these thynges ben sothe: yea forsothe (q I) at the full. Nowe (q she) that thys Margaryte is full of vertue it is well proued, wherfore some grace, some mercye amonge other vertues, I wotte ryght wel on the shall dyscende. ye (q I) yet wolde I haue better declared vertues in thys Margaryte, kyndely to ben grounded. That shal I shewe the (q she) and thou woldest it lerne. Lerne (q I) what nedeth suche wordes: were ye nat well lady youre self that all my cure, all my dyligence, and all my might haue turned by your counsayle, in plesaunce of that perle all my thought and all my studye, with your helpe desyreth, in worldlyppe thylke iewel to encrease all my trauayle and al my besynesse in youre seruyce, thys Margaryte to gladde in somehalue: me were leuer her honoure, her plesaunce, and her good chere thorowe me for to be mayntayned and kepte, and I al suche thynge in her lykynge to be cause, than al ꝑ welthe of bodyly goodes ye coude recke And wolde neuer god, but I put my self in great ieopardye of all that I wolde, that is nowe no more but my lyfe alone, rather than I shulde suffre thylke iewell in anye poynt ben blemyshed, as ferre as I may suffre, and wyth my myghtes stretche Suche thynge (q she) maye moste I further thy grace and the in my seruyce auaunce. But nowe (quod Loue) wylte thou graunte me thylke Margaryte to ben good. O good good (q I) why tempte ye me and tene wyth suche maner speche: I wolde graunte that though I shulde anone dye, and by my trouthe fyght in the quarell, yf any wyght wolde counterplede. It is so moche the lighter (q Loue) to proue our entent.

Ye (q I) but yet wolde I here howe ye wolde proue that she were good by reasonable skyl, that it mowe not ben denyed, for although I knowe and so dothe many other, manyfolde goodnesse & vertue in this Margaryte ben pyented, yet some men there ben that no goodnesse speke: and whet euer your wordes ben herde and your reasons ben shewed, suche yuell spekers lady by auctorite of your excellence, shullen ben stopped & ashamed. And more they that han none acquayntaunce in her persone, yet mowe they knowe her vertues, and ben the more enformed in what wyse they mowe sette theyr hertes, whan hem lyste in to your seruyce any entre make: for trewly al thys to begynne, I wotte well my self that thylke iewel is so precious perle, as a womanly woman in her kynde, in whome of goodnesse, of vertue, and also of answeryng, shappe of lymmes, and features so well in all poyntes acordyng, nothyng fayleth: I leue that kynde her made wyth great studye, for kynde in her person nothyng hath forget, and that is well sene. In euery good wyghtes herte she hath grace of commendyng and of vertuous prayseyng. Alas that euer kynde made her deedely saue onely in that I wot well, that Nature in fourmyng of her in no thynge hathe erred.

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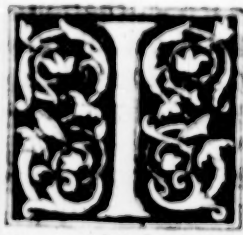
Certes

Certes (ꝙ Loue) thou hast well begonne, and I aske the thys questyon: Is not in generall euerye thynge good? I not (ꝙ I) No (ꝙ she) sawe not god euerye thynge that he made, and werne ryght good? Than is wonder (ꝙ I) howe yuell thynges comen a place, sythen that al thynges weren right good. Thus (ꝙ she) I woll declare euerychè qualyte and euery action, and euery thyng that hath any maner of beynge it is of god, and god it made, of whom is all goodnesse and all beyng, of him is no badnesse: badde to be is naught: good to be is somwhat. and therfore good and beyng is one in vnderstandyng. Howe may this be (ꝙ I) for often han thewes me assayed, and mokell badnesse therin haue I founden, & so me semeth bad to be somwhat in kynde? Thou shalt (ꝙ she) vnderstande that suche maner badnesse, whyche is vsed to purtye wronge doers is somwhat, and god it made and beyng hath, and that is good: other badnesse no beyng hath vtterly. it is in the negatyue of somwhat, and that is naught, and no thyng beyng. The parties essencial of beyng arne sayde in double wyse, as that it is, and these parties ben founde in euerye creature, for all thynge a this halfe the fyrste beyng is beyng through partycipation, takyng partye of beyng. so that euerye creature is dyfference betweene beynge and of hym through whom it is & hys owne beyng: ryght as euery good is a maner of beynge, so is it good thorowe beynge, for it is naught other to be: and euery thynge though it be good it is not of hym selfe good, but it is good by that it is ordinable to the great goodnesse. This dualite after clerkes determinacion is founden in euery creature, be it neuer so syngle of onhed. ye (ꝙ I) but there as it is sayd that god sawe euery thynge of his makyng, and were right good, as youre selfe sayde to me not longe tyme sythen. I aske whether euery creature is sayd good, throughe goodnesse vnfourmed eyther els fourmed, and afterwarde yf it be accepte vtterly good? I shall saye the (ꝙ she) these great passed clerkes han deurded good in to good beyng alone, and that is nothynge but good, for nothynge is good in that wyse but god. Also is good by partycipation, and that is yclepyd good, for farre sette and representa tyue of goodly goodnesse, and after thys manyfolde good is sayd, that is to saye, good in kynde and good in gendre, and good of grace and good of loye. Of good in kynde Austen sayethe, all that ben ben good: But peraunter thou woldest wete whether of hem selfe it be good, or els of anothers goodnesse, for naturel goodnesse of euery substaunce is nothyng els than his substantiall beyng, whiche is yclepyd goodnesse, after comparyson that he hath to his fyxte goodnesse, so as it is inductatyue by meanes in to the fyxte goodnesse. Boece shewyth thys thynge at the full, that this name good is in general name in kynde as it is comparysoned generally to his principal ende, whyche is god, knotte of al goodnesse. Euery creature cryeth god vs made, & so they han full apeted to thylke god by affection, suche as to hem longeth: and in thys wyse all thynges ben good of the great god, whyche is good alone. Thys wonder thyng (ꝙ I) howe ye haue by manye reasons proued my fyrst way to be errour and mysgoyng and cause of baddesse and feble meanynge in the grounde ye aleged to be roted: whence is it that suche badnesse hathe spryngen, sythen all thynges thus in generall ben good, and badnesse hathe no beynge, as ye haue declared? I wene if al thinges ben good, I might than wyth the fyrst waye in that good haue ended, and so by goodnesse haue comen to blysse in your seruyce desyred. All thynge (ꝙ she) is good by beyng in partycipacion out of the fyrst goodnesse, whyche goodnesse is corrupte by badnesse, and badde meanyng maners: god hathe in good thynges that they ben good by beyng, and not in yuel for there is absence of ryghtfull loue, for badnesse is nothynge but onelye yuell wyll of the vser, and through gyftes of the doer, wherfore at the gynnyng of the worlde, euery thynge by hym selfe was good, and in vniuersall they werne ryght good. An eye or a hande is fayrer and betterer in a body sette in his kyndely place, than from the body dyscevered. Euerye thing in his kyndly place being kyndly, good dothe werche, and out of that place voyded, it dissolueth and is defouled him selue. Oure noble god in glyterãde wyse by armony this worlde ordeyned, as in purtreytures storyed wyth colours medled, in whyche blacke and

other derke colours cõmenden the golden & the asured payntyre, euerye parte in kyndely place one besyde another, more for other gyuereth right to lytle layre maketh right layre more glorious, and right so of goodnesse and of other thynges in vertue. Wherfore other badde, and not so good perles as thys Margarye that we han of this matter, yeuerdop the ayre lyteli goodnesse and lyteli vertue, ryght mokell goodnesse and vertue in thy Margaryte to ben proued, in thyrnage wyde to be founde and shewed. Howe shulde ware goodnesse of peace haue ben knowe, but yf warre sometyme reygne, and mokell yuell wrothe. Howe shulde mercy ben proued and no trespace were, by due iustifycacion to be punysshed. Therfore grace and goodnesse of a wyght is founde, the sorowfull hertes in good meanynge to endure, ben comforted, vnyte and accorde betwene hertes knytte in loye to abyde. What wenest thou I retorte or els accompte hym amonge my seruauntes that pleaseth Pallas, in vndoynge of Mercurye, all be it that to Pallas he be knytte by lytle of lawe not accordyng to reasonable co-ference: and Mercurye in doynge haue grace to ben suffered: or els hym that weneth the moone for lasciuenesse of the eye sterre. Loo-therwhyle by nyghtes lyght of the moone, greatly comforteth in derke thoughtes and blynde Vnderstandyng of loue yeueth great gladnesse: who so lyste not beleue whan a sothe tale is shewed, adewe and a debles his name is entred. Wyse folke and worthy in gentrylesse bothe of vertue and of lyuyng ye-uen full credence in sothnesse of loue with a good hert, there as good euydence or experyence in doynge sheweth not the contrarye. Thus myghtest thou haue full prefe in thy Margarytes goodnesse, by commendement of other iewels badnesse, and vselnesse in doynge. Stoundemele diseases yeueth seue-rall houres in loye.

Nowe by my trouthe (quod I) thys is well declared that my Margaryte is good, for sy-then other ben good, and she passeth manye other in goodnesse and vertue, wherthrough by maner necessarye she muste be good: and goodnesse of thys Margaryte is no thynge els but vertue, wherfore she is vertuous and yf there fayled any vertue in any syde, there were lacke of vertue: badde nothynge els is ne maye be, but lacke and wante of good and goodnesse, and so shulde she haue that same lacke, that is to saye badde, and that maye not be, for she is good, and that is good me-thynketh all good: and so by consequence me semeth vertuous and no lacke of vertue to haue. But the sonne is not knowe but be shyne, ne vertuous herbes but they haue her kynde werchynge, ne vertue but it strecche in goodnesse or profyte to another, is no vertue. Than by all wayes of reason, sythen mercye and pyte ben moste commended amonge o-ther vertues, and they myght neuer ben she-wed refreshement of helpe and of comforte, but nowe at my moste nede, and that is the kynde werkynge of these vertues: trewely I wene I shall not darre fromthe these helpes fyre and yf he yrue non heate, for fyre is not deined. The sonne but he shyne for sonne is not accompted, water but it were the name shall ben chaunged. Vertue but it werche of goodnesse bothe it fayle, and in to this contra-rye the name shall ben reuerted, and these be impossyble: wherfore the contradictorie that is necessarye nedes muste I leue.

Certes (quod she) in thy person and out of thy mourde these wordes lyen well to ben sayd, and in thyne vnderstandyng to be leued, as in entent of thys Margaryte alone: and here now my spethe in conclusyon of these wordes.



N these thynges (quod she) that me lyst nowe to shew openly shal be founde the mater of thy sycknesse, & what shal ben y medicyn that may be thy solowes lyste and comfort as well the as al other that amyste haue erred, & out of the way walked, so that any drope of good wyll in amendement ben dwelled in their hertes. Prouerbes of Salomon openly te-cheth, howe sometyme an innocent walked by the wave in blyndnesse of a derke nyght, whom mette a woman (yf it be lefely to saye) as a strumpet arayed, redily purueyed in tur nenge of thoughtes with verne tanglynges and of rest unpacient by dissymulacion of my termes, sayeng in thys wyse: Come & he we

dronken

dronken of our swete pappes, vse we couey-
tous collynges. And thus drawen was this
innocent, as an ore to the larder. Ladye (q
I) to me this is a queynte thynge to vnder-
stonde: I praye you of this parable declare
me the entent. This innocent (q she) is a
scholer lernynge of my loze, in seeking of my
blysse, in whyche thynge the daye of hys
thought turnyng enchurieth in to eue, and the
sonne of verye lyght sayinge, maketh derke
nyght in hys conuynge. Thus in derkenesse
of many doutes he walketh, and for blynde-
nesse of vnderstandynge, he ne wote in what
waye he is in: for of the suche one may lightly
ben begyled. To whome came loue fayned,
not clothed of my lyuery, but vnlefull lusty
habyte, wyth softe speche and merry, and with
fayre honyed wordes heretykes & mysse me-
nynge people skileten and wympelen theyr er-
rours. Iulien wytnesseth of an heretyke that
in hys tyrst begynnynge he was a man right
expert in reasones, and swete in hys wordes,
and the werkes myslorden. Thus fareth fay-
ned loue in her tyrst werchynges: thou kno-
west these thynges for trewe, thou haste hem
proued by experience. Sometyme in doyng to
thyn owne person in which thyng thou hast
founde mater of moked displeasse, was not fay-
ned loue redely putteyed thy wyttes to catch
and tourne thy good thoughtes. trewlye she
hath wounded the conscience of many wyth
flowrynge of moked langlynge wordes: and
good wo. the thanked I it for no glose, I am
gladde of my prudence thou haste so manlye
her yeyned. Come arte thou mosthe holden,
that in thy kynde course of good meanyng I
returne thy mynde: I trowe ne had I shewed
the thy Margarite thou haddest neuer retur-
ned. Of tryste in good partyte loue was euer
fayned loue vnquiet as the water of Siloe
whyche euermore flowyth wyth stylnesse &
yuuy noyse tyll it come nyghe the brynke, &
then gyueth it so out of measure to boine,
wyth neuelleries of chaungynge stormes that
in course of euery remynge it is in poynte to
spill al his circuite of cankes. Thus fayned
loue pryuelye at the fullest of hys flowynge,
newe stormes debate to arayse. And all be it
that Mercurius often wyth hole vnderstan-
dynge knowen suche perylous matters, yet
Mercurius so lusty Ion and so leude in theyr
wyttes, that in suche thynges ryght lytell oz
nought done they fele, & wyttē and cryen to
theyr felawes: here is blysse, here is ioy, and
thus into oun same errour, moked folke thy
drawen. Come they sayne, and be we dron-
ken of our pappes, that ben fallas and lyenge
glose, of whych mowe they not souke mylke
of helthe, but deedlye venym and poysen co-
ruptyon of sorowe. Mylke of fallas, is ve-
nym of dysceyte: Mylke of lyeng glose is ve
nym of corruption. Lo what thynge cometh
out of these pappes: vse we couerted collyn-
gers, deseyue we and meddle we falle wordes
wyth sote, and sote wyth falle, trewly this is
the sorynesse of fayned loue, nedes of these
surfettes sycknesse must folowe. Thus as an
ore to thy langozyng deth were thou drawe,
the sote of the smoke hath yall defated. Out
the deper thou somtyme wadest yt semet thou
it founde: yf it had the kylled it had be lytell
wonder. But on that other syde my trewe
seruaut not fayned ne dysceyue comne, for thy
theyr doynge is open, my foundement endu-
reth, be the burthe neuer so great, euer in the
it lasteth: it pryueth lyfe and blyssful goodnesse
in the last endes, though the gynnynges ben
sharpe. Thus of two contraryes, contrarye
ben the effectes. And so thylke Margaryte
thou seruest shall sene the by her seruyce out
of perylous tribulacyon delyuered, by cause
of her seruyce into newe dyscase fallen, by
hope of amendement in the lasse ende, must
loue to be gladded, wherfore of kynde pyte,
her mercy wyth grace of good helpe shall the
graut and els I shal her to strayne that wyth
pyte shall she ben amayllted. Remembre in
thyne herte how horryblye somtyme to thyne
Margaryte thou trespassest, and in a greate
wyse ayenst her thou forleytest: clepe ayen thy
mynde, and know thyne owne gyltes. What
goodnesse, what bountye, wyth moked folo-
wynge pryte founde thou in that tyme: were
thou not goodlye accepted into grace: by my
pluckynge was she to forseruenesse enclyned.
And after I her styred to drawe the to house
and yet wondest thou bitterlye for euer haue
ben refused. But well thou wost, sythen that
I in suche sharpe dyscase might so greatly a-
uayle, what thynkest in thy wyt: howe ferre
mave my wytte stretche: And thou lache not
on thy syde I wol make the knotte: Certes in
thy good berynge I wol acorde with the plain
ter. I haue loude David in my seruice trewe

and with holy oyle of peace and of rest longe by hym desyred, verely he shalbe anoynted. Trouble well to me, and I woll the not layle. The leuynge of þ fyrst waye with good hert of continuaunce, that I se in the grounded, thys purpose to perfourme, drawyth me by maner of cõstrainyng, that nedes must I ben thyne helper: although myrth a whyle be taryed, it shall come at suche season, that thy thought shall ben ioyed. And wolde neuer god, syth thyne herte to my reasons arne assented, and openlye haste confessed thyne awnne mysse goynge, and nowe cryest after mercye, but yf mercy folowed: thy blysse shal ben redy ywys, thou ne woost howe sone. Nowe be a good chylde I rede. The kynde of vertues in thy Margarite rehersed, by strength of me in thy person shul werche. Comforte the in this for thou mayst not mystary. And these wordes sayde, she streyght her on lengthe and rested a whyle.

¶ Thus endeth the seconde booke, and here after folowyth the thyrde boke.

Of nõble sayne these clerkes þ it is naturell fume of discrete thinges as in tellynge one, two, thre & so forth: but amonge all nombres thre is determined for moste certayne. Wherfore in nombre certayne this werke of my besy leudnesse I thynke to ende and parfourme. Ensample by thys world in thre tymes is deuyded: of whych the fyrst is cleped Denacion, that is to say, goyng out of trewe way. and al that tho deyden in her were they punysshed for a mans synne, tyll grace & mercy fette hem thence, and there ended the fyrste tyme. The seconde tyme lasteth from the cõmynge of mercyable grace, vntyll the ende of transytory tyme, in whyche is shewed þ true way in forgoyng of the badde, and that is cleped tyme of grace: and that thynge is not yeuen by deserte of welnynge one benefyte for another, but onely through goodnesse of the yeuer of grace in thilke tyme. Who so cã well vnderstande, is shapen to be saued in soulred blysse. The thyrd tyme shal gyn when trasytory thynges of worldes han made their end and that shal ben in ioye, glory, and rest, both body and soule, that well han deserued in the tyme of grace. And thus in that heuen togyther shul they dwel perpetuelly without any ymaginatyfe yuel in any halue. These tymes are fygured by tho thre dayes that oure god was closed in erthe, and in the thyrde arose, shewynge our resurrection, to ioye and blysse of tho that it deserue, by his mercyable grace. Do this leud boke in thre matters accordaut to tho tymes, lyghtly by a good inseet mave ben vnderstande, as in the fyrste erroure of mysse goynge is shewed, with sorowful pyne punysshed is cryed after mercye. In the secode is grace in good waye proued, whyche is lay lynge wythout deserte, thrike fyrst mysse amendynge in correction of tho erroures and euen waye to bryngc, wyth comforte of welfare into amendement werynge. And in the thyrde ioye and blysse graunted to hym that well canne deserue it, and hath sauour of vnderstandynge in the tyme of grace. Thus in ioye of my thyrd boke shal the matter be fyl it ende. But specialli cause I haue in my hert to make this processe of a Margarite perle, that is so precious a gẽme with clere and lytel, of which stones or iewel, þ tõges of vs Englysh people turneth þ right name, & clepeth hem Margery perles: thus varyeth our speche frõ many other langages. For trewly Latyn, Frenche, and many mo other langages clepeth hem Margery perles, the name Margarites or Margaryte perles: wherfore in that denominacion I wol me accorde to other mẽ tonges, in that name clepyng. These clerkes that treaten of kyndes & studyen out the properte there of thynges, sayne the Margarit is a lytel whyte perle, throughout holowe & rounde, and vertuous, and on the see fyndes in the more Britayne in muskel shelles of þ heauenly dewe the best ben engendred: in which by experience ben founde thre fayre vertues. One is it yeueth comforte to the felyng spirites in bodely persones of reason. Another is good, it is profytable helth ayenst passyons of soyre mẽs hertes. And the thyrd it is nedeful and noble in staunchyng of bloode, there els to moche wolde out ren. To whych perle and vertues me lyst to lyken at this tyme philosophie wyth her thre speces, that is naturel and moral, and resonable: of whych thynges hereth what sayne these great clerkes. Philosophie

sophye is knowyng of deuynly & manly thinges torned wyth studye of good lyuyng, and thys stante in two thynges, that is conning and opinion: conning is when a thynge by certaine reson is cõceyued. But wretches and fooles and leude men, many wyll conceyue a thynge and mayntayne it as forsoth, though reson be in the contrarye, wherfore conning is a straũger. Opinion is whyle a thynge is in none certayne, and hydde from mens very knowlegynge, and by no partyte reson fully declared, as thus: yf the sonne be so moche as men wenen, or els yf it be more then the erth For in sothnesse the certayne quantyte of that planet is vnknowen to erthly dwellers, and yet by opinion of some men it is holden for more then myddle erthe. The fyrst spece of philosophye is natural, whych in kyndely thynges treten, and therwith causes of heuen, and strength of kyndely course: as by arsmetryke, geometry, musyke, & by astronomye, teacheth waves and course of heuens of planetes, and of sterres about heuen and erthe, and other elementes. The seconde spece is morall, which in order of lyuyng maners techeth, and by reson proueth vertues of soule most worthy in our lyuyng whych ben prudence, iustyce, temperaunce, and strength. Prudence is goodlye wysedome in knowyng of thinges. Strẽgth bordeth al aduersitees alyche euen. Temperaunce destroyeth brestial lyuyng, wyth easy beryng. And iustyce ryghtfully iugeth, and iugyng departeth to euery wyght that is his owne. The thyrde spece turneth into reason of vnderstandynge al thynges to be said soth and dyscussed, & that in two thynges is deuyded: one is art, another is rethorike, in which two al lawes of mans reason ben grounded or els mayntayned. And for thys booke is all of loue, and therafter beareth hys name, and philosophie and lawe muste here to acorden by theyr clergiall dyscripcios: as philosophie for loue of wysedome is declared: Lawe for mayntenyaunce of peace is holden, and these with loue must nedes acordẽ therfore of hem in this place haue I touched. Ordre of homly thynges & honest maner of lyuyng in vertue, with rightful iugemẽt in causes & profitable administracion in cõmunaltyes of realmes & cites, by cuenhed profitably to raigne, not by synguler auauntage ne by priue enuy, ne by soleyn purpose in couetise of worshipp or of goodes, ben dyspoſed in opẽ rule shewed, by loue philosophy, & lawe, & yet loue toforne al other. Wherfore as susterne in vnite they acordẽ & one ende that is peace & rest, they causen noyy thynge, & in the loye mayntenyen to endure.

Now then, as I haue declared: my boke acordeth with discripcio of thre thynges, & the Margarit in vertue is lykned to philosophie wyth her thre speces. In whych maters euer twey ben acordaut with bodely reason, & the thyrde with the soule: But in cõclusion of my boke & of thys Margarit peerle in knyttyng together lawe by thre sondry maners shalbe lykened, þ is to saye lawe, ryght, & custome, whych I wold declare: all þ is lawe cometh of goddes ordynaunce by kyndly worchyng, & thylke thynges ordayned by mãnes wyttes arne ycleped ryght, which is ordained by many maners & in constitution wrytten: but custome is a thynge that is accepted for ryghte or for lawe, there as lawe and ryght faylen, and there is no differẽce, whether it come of scrypture or of reason. Wherfore it sheweth that lawe is kyndly gouernaunce: Ryght cometh out of mannes probable reason: and custome is of cõmen vsage by length of tyme vsed, and custome not wrytte is vsage, and yf it be wrytte constitucion it is ywritten and ycleped: But lawe of kynde is comen to euery nation, as conionction of man and woman in loue, succession of chyldren in herytaunce, institucyon of thynge by strength taken or lent and this lawe amõge al other halte the soueraynest gree in worshyp, whych lawe began at the begynnynge of reasonable creature, it harved yet neuer for no chaungyng of tyme: cause forsothe in ordaynynge of law, was to constrayne mens hardynesse into peace, and wythdrawyng his euell wyl, & turnynge malyce into goodnesse, and that innocence sykerly withouten tenefull anoye amõge shrewes safely myght inhabyte by protection of safeconducte, so that þ shrewes harme for harme by dryde of ferdenesse shulden restrayne. But forsothe in kyndely lawe nothynge is cõmended, but suche as goddes wil hath cõfyrmed, ne nothyng denyed but cõtrariousnesse of goddes wyl in heauen: eke then all lawes or custome, or els cõstitucion by vsage or wrytyng that cõtrarien lawe of kynde, vtterly ben repugnaunt and aduersary to our goddes wyl of heuen. Trewly lawe of kynde for goddes owne

dyone lusty will is bereby to mainteine, vnder which lawe (& vnworthye) both profesle and reguler arne obedience and bounden to this Margarite perle, as by knotte of loues statutes and stablyshment in kynde, whyche that goodlye may not ben wythsetten. Lo vnder this bonde am I constrayned to abyde, and man vnder lyuyng lawe ruled: by that lawe oweth after deserres to be rewarded by payn or by mede, but yf mercy weyue the payne: so then be parte, reasonfully maye be sey, that mercy both ryght and lawe passeth, thentent of al these maters is the lest clere vnderstandynge, to wete at thende of this thyrde boke ful knowyng thorow goddes grace, I thinke to make neuerthelater, yet yf these thynges haue a good & a sleight inseet, which that can louke hony of the harde stone, oyle of the dyre rocke, may lightly sele nobley of mater in my lewde ymagynacion closed. But for my boke shalbe of loue as I sayde, & I so fere set fro thylke place fro whece gladnesse should come, my corde is to shorte to let my boket ought catch of that water, and fewe men ben about my corde to ethe, & many in ful purpose be redy yet shotter to make, & to enclose the fre, that my boket of toy nothing should catch, but enuy renume my careful sorowes to encrese & yf I dye for payne, þ were gladnesse at theyr herres. Good lord sende me water into þ cop of these mountaynes, & I shall drynke therof, my thurstes to slacke: & sey these be colorable wordes into helth of goodnesse of my fauour and I halpen. And yet I say more, the house of loue to me is not opened. How dare my sorowful gost then in any mater of gladnesse thynken to trete, for euer letbynges & complaintes be redy refrete in his meditacios as wordes in manyfold sondes comyng about I not then. And therfore what maner of loue coude endute, but yet at dore shal I knocke, yf the key of Dauid wold the locke vnshyt, & he bryng me in, which that chyldres tonges both openeth and closeth. Holy spirite, where he wyl worcheth, departing goodly as hi liketh

Now to goddes laude & reuerence, profit of the readers, amendement of maners of þ heerers, encresyng of worshyp amoge loues seruauntes, releuyng of my hert into grace of my iewel, & frendshyp plesance of thys peerle. I am stered in thys makynge, and for nothynge els: and yf any good thynge to mennes lykynge in this scripture be founde, thanketh the mayster of grace, whych that of that good and all other is authour, and principall dore. And yf any thynge be vnsufficyent or els myslykynge, w that that the feudnesse of myne vnable connynge, for bodyly disease anoyeth the vnderstandynge in soule. A dyseasely habitacion letteth the wyttes many thynges, and namely in sorowe. The custome neuer the later of loue, be longe tyme of seruyce in ternes I thynke to pursue, whiche ben lyuely to yeue vnderstandyng in other thynges. But nowe to enforme the of thys Margarites goodnesse I may her nat half preyse. & therfore nat she for my boke, but this boke for her is worthy to be comended, tho my boke be feude: ryght as thynges nat for places, but places for thynges oughten to be desyred and praysed.

And loue þ I owe trewly the wordes I haue wel vnderstand. Certes me thinketh be right good, & me worketh why thou so lightly passest in the lawe. Softly þ I my wyt is feude & I am right blynd and that mater depe, how shulde I than haue waded lightly myght I haue drenched and spylte ther my selfe. Ye þ she I shall helpe the to swym. For ryght as lawe punisheth brekers of preceptes and the contrary doers of the wurten constitutions: ryght so ayenward lawe rewardeth and yeueth mede to hem that lawe strengthen. By one lawe thys rebel is punished and this innocent is meded, the thefe is enprisoned & thys ryghtfull is corowned. The same lawe that yeueth by mebloche without forsaking, the same lawe yeueth lybel of depertion: by cause of deuoyse both demed and declared. Ye ye þ I I fynde in no lawe to mede and reward in goodnes the gylte of deserres. Sole (þ she) gylte couerted in your lawe, myn ell merite deserueth. Also Paulin of Rome was crowned, that by hym the mayntenners of Pompeus weren knowe & distroyed: & yet to forn was this Paulyn chefe of Pompeus counsayle. This law in Rome hath yet his name of meseryng in mede, þ bewrayeng of the conspiracy, ordayned by tho senatours the dethe. Julius Cesar is accepted in to Catons right wurshipe, for euer in trouth flourisheth his name among the knowers of reason. Perdicas was crowned in þ heritage of Alexander the great,

great for tellynge of a preuy hate that kinge Porrus to Alexander hadde. wherfore euery wyght by reason of law after his right wyse nede apertly his mede maychalége: & so thou that mayntyneſt lawe of kynde, & therfore diſeaſe haſt ſuffred in ỳ law, reward is worthy to be rewarded & ordayned, & apartly thy mede might thou chalége. Certes ỳ I thys haue I wel lerned, & euer hereafterward I ſhal drawe me therafter in onehed of wyl to abyd this lawe both mayntene & kepe, & ſo hope I beſt entre into your grace, wel deſeruynge in to worſhip of a wight, wythout nedful copul ſyon ought medfully to be rewarded. Truly ỳ Loue that is ſothe, & tho by conſtitution good ſeruyce in to profyt & auantage ſtretch, yitterly many mé it deme to haue more deſert of mede, thé good wyl not cópelled. Se now ỳ I how may men holden of thys the contrary. And what is good ſeruice: of yourwold I here thys queſtion declared I ſhall ſay the ỳ ſothe in a fewe woordes reaſenat le workinges in pleſaunce & pleyte of thy ſouerayne. How ſhuld I this perfourne ỳ I. Kyzt wel ỳ ſothe & here me nowe a lytel. It is hardely ỳ ſothe to vnderſtande ỳ ryghte as mater by due ouerchaungynge ſolowith his perfectio and his forme: Kyght ſo euery man by ryghtfull werkynges ought to folowe the letul deſyres in hys herte, and ſe to forme to what ende he deſeruith, for many tymes he that loketh not after thedes but yitterly therof is vnknowen befalleth otte many yuels to don, wher through ỳt he be ware ſhamefully he is confounded, thende therof neden to be before loked to euery deſyrer of ſuche forſyght, in good ſeruyce thre thynges ſpecially nedeth to be rulers in hys workes. I wille that he do good, nerre that he do by electiou in hys own herte, and the thyrde that he do godlye wythouten any ſurquedry in thoughtes. That your werkes ſhulden be good in ſeruice or in any other actes auntheutes many may be alegednener therlater by reaſon thus maye it be ſhewed. All your werkes be cleped ſecende, & mouen in vertue of the fyrſt wercher, whych in good workes wrought you to procede, and ryghte ſo your werkes mouen in to vertue of the laſt ende, & right in the fyrſt workyng were not, no man ſhulde in the ſecóde werche. Right ſo but ye feled to what ende & ſene theyr goodnes cloſed, ye ſhulde nomore reche what ye wrought but the gruuynge gan wyth good, and there ſhall it ceaſe in the laſt ende, yt it be well conſydred. Wherfore the myddle, yf other wayes it drawe then accordaunt to the endes, there ſtynteth the courſe of good, and another maner courſe entreth, & ſo it is a parte by hym ſelue, and euery part be not accordaunt to hys all, is foule & ought to be eſchewed. Wherfore euery thynge ỳ is wrought and be not good, is not accordaunt to the as of hys all hole, it is foule, & ought to be withdrawe. Thus the perſons that neyther do good ne harme, thamen foule theyr kynde, wherfore wythout workynge of good actes in good ſeruyce, may no man ben accepted. Trewly the yike that han myght to do good and done it not, the crowne of worſhyp ſhall be take from them, and wyth ſhame ſhall they be anulled. And ſo to make one werke accordaunt wyth hys endes, euery good ſeruaunt by reaſon of coſequece muſte do good nedes. Certes it fulfyſeth not alone to be good, but goodly wythall folowe, the thanke of goodneſſe els is nought he deſeruith: Forſothe as al your beyng come fro the greatt good in whom all goodneſſe is cloſed. Kyght ſo your endes ben directe to the ſame goodneſſe ſtedefaſtly determinedly & good ſeruyce acceptable in vnderſtandynge, he that in hert doth away good, & he that loketh not to good loketh not to good, but he that nothynges doth not goodly draweth away the beſyres of thende not goodly muſt nedes be bad. For badde is nothynge els but abſence or negatyf of good, as derkneſſe is abſence or negatyue of lyght. Then he that doth goodly deſyreth thylke good in to thende of badde: & that thyng not good folowe, the badneſſe to ſuche folke otte folowith. Thus contrariant werkers of thende that is good, ben worthy the contrary of thede ỳ is good to haue. Now ỳ I may any good dede be done but yf goodly it helpe. Yes ỳ Loue, the deuel doth many good dedes, but goodly he leueth behynd for euen badly & in diſcernable wyſe he worketh wherfore the cotrary of thende him folowith And do he neuer ſo many good deedes, becauſe goodly is away, his goodnes is not rekened. Lo then tho a mā do good, but he do goodly thende in goodneſſe wol not folowe, & thus in good ſeruice be in good dede & goodly don muſten ioyne to gethir, & that it be don wyth

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free choise in hert: & els deserueth he not ꝓ me rite in goodnesse, ꝓ woll I ꝓue, for yf thou do any thyng good by chaūce or by happe, in what thyng art thou therof worthy to be cō mended for nothynge by reason of ꝓ turneth into thy praysyng ne lackyng. Lo thilke thig done by hap by thy wyl is not caused, & ther by shulde I thanke or lacke deserue: & sythen that sayleth thende wherh that wel shuld re ward, must nedes faile. Clerkes sayn, no mā but wyllyng is blessed, a good dede ꝓ he hath done is not done of free choyse willyng, with out which blysfulnesse may not folowe. Ergo neuther thāke of goodnesse ne seruice in ꝓ is cōtrary of the good ende, so thē to good ser uice lōged good dede goodly don, thorow fre choice in hert. Truely ꝙ I this haue I wel vnderstande. Wel ꝙ she euery thynge thus done sufficiētly by lawe that is cleped iustice after reward clayme. For lawe & iustice was ordayned in this wyse suche deserres in good nesse after quantite in doynge by mede to re warde, & of necessite of such iustice ꝓ is to say ryghtwysnesse was free choice in deseruynge of wel or of yuel graūted to reasonable creatu res. Euery man hath fre arbitrement to chose good or yuel to performe. Now ꝙ I thō yf I by my good wyl deserue this swete gyfte perle & am not therto cōpelled, and haue free choice to do what me lyketh: Shē is the hol den as me thinketh to rewarde therfet of my good wyl. Goddes forbode els ꝙ Loue no wyse meaneth otherwyse I trowe, fre wyl of good hert after mede deserueth. Hath euery ye man ꝙ I free choice by necessatye maner of wyl in euery of his doynges, ꝓ him lyketh by goddes proper purueyaunce. I wolde fayn ꝓ wel declared to my leude vnderstādynge, for necessary & necessyte ben wordes of mokel en tencion, clofyng (as to saye) so mote it be ne des, & otherwyse maye it not betyde. Thys shalt thou lerne ꝙ she so thou take hede in my speche. Yf it were not in mānes owne ly berte of fre wyl to do good or bad, but to the one tyed by bonde of goddes prevordinaunce: Thē do he neuer so well it were by nedefull cōpulcion of thilke bonde & not by fre choice, wherby nothyng he deserueth, & do he neuer so yuel it were not man for to wyte, but one lyche to hym that such thynge ordayned hym to done. Wherfore he ne ought for bad be pu nyshed, ne for no good dede be rewarded, but of necessite of ryghtwysnesse was ther fore free choice of arbitrement put in mans proper dispositiō: truely yf it were otherwyse it cōtrarved goddes charite, ꝓ badnes & good nesse rewardeth after deserte of payne or of mede. Me thynketh this wōder ꝙ I for god by necessite forwote al thynges comyng, and so mote it nedes be: & thylke thynges ꝓ bene done be our fre choice comen nothynge of ne cessite but onely by wyll: Howe maye thys stande togyther and so me thynketh truely, that fre choice fully repugneth goddes forwe tynge. Truly lady me semeth they mowe not stande togethert.

Then gan loue nygh me nere, & with a noble countenaūce of vysage & lymmes, dressed her nygh my syttyng place. Take forth ꝙ she thy pen & redely write these wordes, for if god wol, I shal brin so enforme to the ꝓ thy leud nesse which I haue vnderstād in that mater, shal openly be cleped & thy sight in ful lokyng therin amēded. Yfit if thou thinke that god des prescience repugne lyberte of arbytrye of arbitrement it is impossible ꝓ they shuld ac corde in ouhed of soth to vnderstādyng. Yea ꝙ I forsoth so I it conceyue. Wel ꝙ she yf thy be impossible were away, the repugnace that semeth to be therin, were bitterlye remo ued. Shewe me ꝓ absence of that impossibi lite ꝙ I. So ꝙ she I shall. Nowe I sup pose ꝓ they mowe stande togethert, prescience of god who folowyth necessite of thynges cōming & lyberte of arbitrement, thorow which thou beleuest many thinges to be without necessite Both these propositions be soothe ꝙ I & wel mowe stande togethert, wherfore this case as possible I admyt. Truly ꝙ she & this case is impossible. Howe so ꝙ I. For herof ꝙ she folowyth & wereth another impossible. Proue me that ꝙ I, that I shal ꝙ she for sothyng is cōmyng without necessite, & god wot that tofore, for althig cōmyng be bef ore woote, & that be before wot of necessite is cōming: as be before wot be ꝓ case by necessary maner then, or els thorow necessite is sothyng to be without necessite, & wherto euery wyght ꝓ hath good vnderstāding is seue these thiges to be repugnāt. Prescience of god, which that folowyth necessite & lyberte of arbytrement,

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fro which is remoued necessitie, for truly it is necessary ꝑ god haue forewetyng of thyng withouten any necessitie cõmynge. Ye (ꝙ I) but yet remeue ye not away fro myne vnder standyng, the necessitie folowynge gods beforewetyng, as thus. God beforne wote me in seruice of loue to be bounden to this Margaryte perle, & therfore by necessitie thus to loue am I bounde, & yf I not had loued, tho rowe necessitie had I bene kept from al loue dedes. Certes (ꝙ loue) bicause this mater is good & necessary to declare, I thynke herein wel to abyde, and not lightly to passe. Thou shalt not (ꝙ she) say al only god beforne wot me to be a louer or no louer, but thus: god beforne wot me to be a louer without necessitie And so it folowyth whether thou loue or not lou', euery of hem is and shalbe. But nowe thou seest the impossibilitie of the case, and ꝑ possibilitie of thylke that thou wendest had ben impossyble, wherfore the repugnaunce is annulled. Ye (ꝙ I) & yet do ye not awaye the strengthe of necessitie whan it is sayde: though necessitie it is me in loue to abyde, or not to loue without necessitie for god beforn wot it. This maner of necessitie forsothe ꝯmeth to some men in to coaction, that is to sayne constrayning or els prohibition that is defendynge wherfore necessitye is me to loue of wyll. I vnderstande me to be constrayned by some puny strength to the wyll of louynge, and it no loue to be defended fro the wyll of louyng, and so thorow necessitie me semeth to loue, for I loue, or elles not to loue, yf I not loue wherthrugh neither thal me maugre in tho thynges may I deserue.

Now ꝙ she, thou shalt wel vnderstande, that often we sayne thyng thorow necessitie to be that by no strength to be neyther is coacted ne constrayned, and through necessitie not to be, that with no defendynge is remoued, for we sayne it is thorowe necessitie god to be immortall nought deedlyche, and it is necessitie god to be ryghtfull, but not that any strength of byolente maner constrayneth hym to be immortall, or defendeth him to be vnryghtfull, for nothynge maye make hym deedly or vnryghtful. Ryght so if I say thorowe necessitie is the to be a louer or els none of tho, thorowe wyll, as god beforne wote: it is not to vnderstande that any thyng defendeth or forbyt, the thy wyll whyche shall not be, or els cõstrayneth it to be which shalbe: that same thyng forsoth god before wot which he beforne seeth any thynge cõmende of only wyll, that wyl neyther is cõstrayned ne defended thorowe any other thynge: & so thorowe lybertie of arbytrement it is do, ꝑ is done of wyll. And truly my good chylde, yf these thynges be wel vnderstond I wene that none inconuenient shalt thou fynde betwene gods forwetyng & lybertie of arbytrement, wherfore I wot wel they may stand to gyder. Also furthermore, who ꝑ vnderstandyng of prescience propryelyche cõsyderith thorow the same wyse that any thyng be afore wyst, is sayd for to be cõmyng it is pronounced, there is nothing to forn wyll, but thyng cõmyng, forwetinge is but of trouth deute may not be wyst: wherfore whã I sey ꝑ god beforne wot any thyng, tho, I necessitie is thilke thyng to be cõmyng, al is one it I sey it it shalbe: but this necessitie neither contrayneth ne defendeth any thyng to be or not to be Therfore of thy yf loue is put to be it is said of necessitie to be, or els for it is put not to be it is affirmed not to be of necessitie: not for ꝑ necessitie cõtrameth or defendeth loue to be or not to be. For whã I say, it loue shalbe of necessitie it shalbe, here folowyth necessitie, the thyng to forn put, it is as moche to sey, as yf it were thus pronounced, ꝑ thing shalbe: none other thynge signifyeth this necessitye but onely thus, ꝑ shall be maye not togyder be & not be. Euenlyche also it is forthe, loue was and is, & shalbe not of necessitie, and nede is to haue be all that was, & nedeful is to be al that is, & cõmyng to all that shalbe: and it is not the same to saye, loue to be passed, & loue passed to be passed, or loue present to be present, and loue to be present, or els loue to be commynge, and loue commynge to be commynge: dyuersitye in settynge of wordes, maketh diuersitie in vnderstonding altho in the same sentẽce they accorde of signification tyght as it is not all one: loue sweete to be swete, & loue to be swete: for moche loue is bitter & sorowful er hertes ben eased, & yet it gladeth thilke sorowful hert on suche loue to thynke. Forsothe (ꝙ I) otherwhyle I haue had mokell blys in hert of loue, ꝑ stoutnesse hath me sorily anoyed: & certes lady for I se my selfe this knit with this Margaret perle as by bonde of your seruyce, & of no lybertie

of wyl my hert will nowe not accorde this ser
uice to loue. I can demen in my selfe none o-
therwyse, but thorowe necessitie am I con-
strayned in this seruyce to abyde. But alas
than, yf I thorowe nedefull cópulion ma-
gre me be withholde, lytle thanke for all my
great trauayle haue I than deserued. Now
(q this lady) I saye as I sayde: Me lyketh
this mater to declare at the full, & why, for
many men haue had druers fantasyes, and
reasons both on one syde thereof & in the o-
ther. Of whiche ryght sone I trowe if thou
wolt vnderstód thou shalt conceue the sen-
tence, to the partye more probable by reasó,
& in soth knowyng, by ý I haue of this ma-
ter maked an ende. Certes (q I) of these thi-
ges long haue I had great luste to be lerned,
for yet I wene gods wyl & his prescience ac
cordeth with my seruice, in louyng of thys
precious Margaryte perle. After whó euer
in my hert with thurstyng desyre wete I do
brenne: but wasting I langour & fade, and ý
day of my desteny in deth or in ioy I vnbide
but yet in thende I am comforted be my sup
posayle in blysse, & in ioye to determyne af-
ter my desyres. That thyng (q loue hastely
to the neygh, god graut of his grace & mer-
cy, and this shalbe my prayer tyl thou be ly-
kende in hert at thyne owne wyll. But now
to enlourme the in this mater (q this lady)
thou woste where lefte, that was loue to be
swete, and loue swete to be swete, is not all
one for to saye: for a tree is not alway by ne-
cessitie whyte somtyme er it were whyte, it
myght haue be not whyte: & after tyme it is
whyte, it maye be not whyte: But a whyte
tree euermore nedefull is to be whyte: for nei
ther tofore ne after it was whyte, myght
it be together whyte and not whyte. Also
loue by necessitie is not present as nowe in ý
for er it were present it myght haue be, that
it shulde now not haue be, and yet it may be
that it shal not be present, but thy loue pre-
sent, which to her margarite the hath bond,
nedefull is to be present. Truly some doing
of action not by necessitie is cómynge fette to
some it be, it maye be that it shal not be com
myng: thing forsoth comynge nedefull is to
be cómynge, for it may not be that cómynge
shall not be cómynge: and ryght as I haue
sayde of present and of future tymes, ý same
sentence in sothnesse is of the preterit, ý is to
say tyme passed for thig passed, must nedes
be passed, & yet it wer it myght haue not be,
wherfore it shuld not haue passed. Ryght so
whá loue cóming is said of loue ý is to com
nedefull is to be ý is sayd, for thyng cómyng
neuer is not comyng, & so oft the same thing
we sayn of the same, as whá we sayn euery
man is a man, or euerye louer is a louer, so
must it be nedes, in no way may he be má &
no man together. And yf it be not by neces-
sitie, that is to say, nedefull al thyng cómynge
to be cómyng, than som thyng commyng is
not cóming, and that is impossible, right as
these termes nedefull, necessitie, and neces-
sary betoken and signify thyng nedes to be,
& it may not otherwyse be. Ryght these ter-
mes impossyble signifyeth, that thynge is
not & by no way may it be, than thorow par
fyte necessitie, al thyng cómyng is cómyng,
but that is by necessitie, folowyth with no
thyng to be cóstrayned: so whan that com-
myng is sayd of thyng, not alwaye thynge
thorowe necessitie is, altho it be commynge.
For if I saye tomorowe loue is cómynge in
this Margarites hert, not therfore thorow
necessitie shal thilke loue be, yet it maye be ý
it may not be, although it were commynge.
Neuertheles, fórthe it is soth that some-
thyng be of necessitie, that is sayde to come:
as yf I say tomorow by cómyng the rising
of the sun, yf therfore with necessitie I pro-
nounce cómynge of thynge to come, in this
maner loue to mone cómynge in thy Mar-
garyte to the warde by necessitie is cómyng
or els the rysyng of the sunne to morne com
myng, through necessitie is comynge. Loue
sothly which may not be of necessitie alone
folowyng, thorowe necessitie cómynge it is
made certayne. For futur of future is sayde,
that is to sayne cómyng of cómynge is saide
as if tomorow cómyng is thorowe necessitie
cóming it is. Arysyng of the sun thorowe ne-
cessitie is in cóming, it is to vnderstád ý one
is to forgoig necessitie, which maketh thyng
to be, therfore it shalbe, for nedefull is that
it be. Another is folowyng necessitie, which
nothing cóstrayneth to be, and so by necessi-
te it is to come, why for it is to come. Now
than, whan we sayne, ý God beforne wote
thyng cómyng, nedeful it is to be commyng,
yet therfore make we not in certayne, euer-
more thyng to be thorow necessitie cómyng.

Sothly

Soothly thynge commynge may not be not comynge by no waye, for it is the same sentence of vnderstandyng: as yf we saye thus. yf god before wot any thynge, nedefull is that to be commynge. But yet therfore folowth not the prescience of God, thynge thorowe necessitie to be comyng: for all tho god tofore wote all thynges comynge, yet not therfore he before wote euery thynge commyng thorowe necessetie. Som thynges he before wot commynge of frewyll out of reasonable creature. Certes q I these termes nede and necessitie, haue a queynte maner of vnderstandynge, they wolde dullen manye mens wittes. Therfore q she I woll hem openly declare, and more clerely thā I haue tofore er I departe hence.

HEre of this mater quod she, thou shalt vnderstande that ryght as it is not nedefull God to wyne, that he wyll, ne more in manye thynges is not nedeful a man to wyne that he woll.

And euer ryght as nedeful is to be what that god woll, ryght so to be it is nedefull, that man woll in tho thynges, whiche that god hath put into mans subiection of wyllynge: as yf a man woll loue that he loue: yf he ne wol loue that he loue not, of suche other thynges in mans dispositio. For why nowe than that god woll maye not be, what he woll the wyll of man thorowe no necessitie to be constrayned or els defended for to wyne, and he wolle the effecte to folowe the wyll than is it nedefull wyll of man to be free, and also to be that he woll. In this maner it is soth, that thorowe necessitie is mānes werke in louyng, that he wol do although he woll it not with necessitie. Quod I thā how stant it in loue of thylke wyl, sythen mē loue wyllyng of free choyce inhert wherfore yf it be thorowe necessitie, I pray you ladye of an answer this question to assoyle. I wil (quod she) answere the blyuely: Ryght as men wyll not thorowe necessitie, ryght so is not loue of wyll thorowe necessitie, ne thorowe necessitie wrought thylke same wyll: for yf he wold it not with good wyl, it shuld not haue ben wrought, although p he doeth it is nedefull to be done.

But yf a man do synne, it is nothyng elles but to wyll, that he shulde not: ryght so syn of wyl is not to be maner necessary done, no more than wyll is necessary. Neuertheles later this is soth, yf a man woll synne, it is necessary hym to synne, but though thylke necessitie nothyng is constrayned ne defended in the wyll, ryght so thylke thyng that frewyll woll and may, and not may not wyne, and nedefull is that to wyne he may not wyne but thilke to wyne nedefull is, for impossyble to hym it is onethyng, and the same to wyne he may not wilne, but thilke to wilne nedefull is: for impossible to hym it is one thynge, and the same to wyne and notte to wyne. The werke forsoth of wyl to whome it is yeue that it be that he hath in wyll, and that he wol not voluntary of spontany it is, for by spontany wyll it is do, that is to saye with good wyll, not constrayned: than by wyl not constrayned, it is constrayned to be and that is it may not togyther be. Yf thys necessitie maketh lybertye of wyll, whiche p atone they weren they myght haue ben effected and shonned: God than, which that knoweth al truthe, and nothyng but truthe, al thefe thynges as they are spontany or necessatye ryght, and as he seeth so they ben, so with thefe thynges well considered, it is open at the full, that without all maner repugnaunce, god before wot all maner thynges ben done by frewyll, which atonen they weren myght haue ben neuer they shulde be and yet ben they thorowe a maner necessitie fromtre wyll discended.

Hereby maye quod she lightly ben knowe that not all thynges to be is of necessytye though God haue hem in his prescience, for some thynges to be is of lybertye of wyll: and to make the to haue full knowynge of goddes before wetynge. Heare me (quod she) what I shall I saye. Blythlye ladye q I me lyst this mater entyrely to vnderstād. Thou shalt q she vnderstande, that in heauen is goddes being, although he be ouer al by power, yet there is abydynge of deuyne person, in which heuen is euerlastynge presence, whoute any mouable tyme there fore haue I not sayd tofore this, as tyme but teth, ryght so auenwarde tyme healeth and remaydeth: and a tre oft fayled is hold more deyntye whan it seute forth bryngeth.

A marchaunt that for ones lesyng in the see nomore to auenture thynketh, he shal neuer with auenture come to rychesse: so oft must men on the oke smyte, tyll the happye dente haue entred, which with ꝑ okes owne sway maketh it to come all at ones. So ofte fal-leth the lethy water on the harde rocke, tyll it haue thorow perced it. The euen draught of the wyse drawer, maketh the wyre to ben euen and supple wercheyng, and if he stynted in his draught, the wyre breaketh a sonder. Euery tre wel springeth whā it is wel grou-ded and not often remoued. what shall this frute be (ꝙ I) nowe it gyueth the ryper Grace (quod she) in parfyte loye to endure and ther with hou begon. Grace (ꝙ I) me thinketh I shulde haue at ewarde for my long trauayle I shal tell the (quod she) retrybution of thy good willes to haue of thy Margaryte yet le it beareth not the name of mede, but only of good grace, and that cometh not of thy-de serte, but of thy Margaryte goodnesse, & vertue alone. (Quod I) shulde al my longe trauayle haue no reward but thorow grace and soueryne your seruen sarde, ryght wis-nesse euenlyche rewardeth to quyte one be-nefite for an other. That is soth (quod loue) euer as I sayd, as to hym that doeth good, which to done he were neyther holde ne yet constrayned. That is soth quod I). Truly, (quod she) all that euer thou dost to thy mar-garyte perle, of will, of loue, and of reason thou owest to done it, yet is nothyng els but yeldynge of thy det in quytyng of thy grace, which the the lent whā ye fyrst met. I wene (quod I) ryght lytle grace to me she delyue-red. Certes it was harde grace, it hath nigh me astrangled. That it was good grace I wot wel thou wylt it graunt er thou depart hence. Yf anye man yeue to an other wyght to whom that he ought not, and which that of hym selfe nothyng maye haue, a garmēt or a cote, though he weare the cote or elles thy he clothynge, it is not to put hym y was naked the cause of his clothyng, but onely to him that was yeuer of the garnement. wher fore I saye, thou that were naked of loue, & of thy selfe none haue myghtest, it is not to put thyne owne perso, sythen thy loue came to thorowe thy Margaryte perle. Ergo she was yeuer of the loue although thou it vse, and there lent she the grace thy seruyce to be gynne. She is worthye the thanke of this grace, for she was the yeuer. All the though tes, bely doinges, and pleasāce in thy might and in thy wordes that thou canste deuyse, ben but ryght lytle in quytynge of thy dette: had she not ben, suche thyng had not ben stu-dyed. So all these maters kyndly drawen homewarde to this Margaryte perrie, for from thence were they borowed, all is holy her to wyte the loue that thou haues: and thus quytest thou thy dette, in that thou sted fastly seruest. And kepe well that loue I the rede, that of her thou hast borowed, and vse it in her seruyce thy dette to quyte, and than art thou able right sone to haue grace, wher fore after mede in none halue mayest thou loke. Thus thy gynnyng and endyng is but grace alone, and in thy good deseruyng thy det thou aquytest without grace is nothyng worth what so euer thou werche. Thanke thy Margaryte of her great grace, that hy-therto the hath grebed and pray her of con-tynuaunce for the in thy werkes hereafter, and that for no myst appe thy grace ouer-thwartly tourne. Grace, glorye, and loue is comynge thorowe good folkes deseртes, and by getynge of grace therin shulde ende. And what is more glorye or more loue than wyl dome and loue in parfyte charite which god hath graunted to all tho that well can deserue. And with that this lady al at ones start into myne hert: here woll I endyde (ꝙ she) for euer. And neuer woll I gone hence, and I woll kepe the from medlynge whyle me lyst here endyde thyne entremetynge ma-ners into stedfastnesse shullen be chaunged.



Quickyche tho thurwe I vp myne eyen, and bugi-ye tho was I astonyed of thys sodayne aduen-ture, and fayne wolde I haue learned howe ver-tues shulden ben knowē in whyche thynges, I hoope to God, hereafter she shall me en-fourmen, and namelye sythen her restynge place is nowe so nyghe at my will, and a-non all these thynges that thys lady sayde, I remembred me by my selfe, and resolued

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the lynes of myne vnderstandyng wyttes. Tho founde I fully all these maters parfitly there wrytten, howe myssle rule by fayned loue both realmes and cyties hathe gouerned a great throwe. How lyghtly me might the fautes espye, howe rules in loue shoulde ben vsed, howe sometyme with fayned loue soule I was begyled, howe I shoulde loue haue knowe, and how I shall in loue wyth my seruyce procede. Also furthermore, I founde of perdurable letters wonderly ther grauen, these maters which I shal nempne. Certes, none age ne other thynge in earthe maye the leest syllable of this in no poynte deface but clerelye as the sunne in myne vnderstandyng soule they shynen. This maye neuer out of my mynde, how I may not my loue kepe, but throwe wyllynge in herte. Wyne to loue maye I not, but I louynge, haue. Loue haue I none but throwe grace of this Margaryte peerle. It is no maner dout, that wyl woll not loue but for it is louynge, as wyl woll not ryghtfully, but for it is ryghtful it selue. Also wyll is not louynge for he woll loue, but he woll loue for he is louynge. It is all one to wyll to be louynge, and louynge is in possession to haue.

Ryght so wyl wol not loue, for of loue hath he in no partye, and yet I deny not louynge wyl wyne more loue to haue, which that he hath not whan he wolde more than he hath: but I saye he maye no loue wyne, yf he no loue haue, throughe whiche thylke loue he shulde wyne: but to haue this louynge wyll may no man of hym selfe but onely through grace folowe going: Ryght so maye no man it kepe, but by grace folowynge. Consydre nowe euery man aryght, and let sene if that any wyght of hym selfe mowe this louynge wyl get, and be therof fulle nothynge haue: for yf it shulde of hym selfe sprynge, eyther it must be wyllyng or not wyllynge. Wyllynge by hym selfe maye be it not haue, sythen hym fayleth the mater that shulde it forth bryng, the matter hym fayleth: why he may therof haue no knowyng, tyll whan grace put it in his herte. Thus wyllyng by hym selfe may be it not haue, and not wyllynge maye be it not haue. Parde euery concept of euery reasonable creature other wyse wyl not graunt wyll in affyrmatyle with not wyllynge by no waye mowe accorde. And although this louynge woll come in myne hert by frenesse of arbytrement, as in this boke fully is shewed, yet owe I not therfore as moche alow my free wyll, as grace of that Margaryte to me leaned, for neyther myght I without grace to fomegoinge, and afterwarde folowyng, thylke grace get ne kepe, and lese shal I it neuer but yf free wyll it make, as in wyllyng other wyse than grace hath me graunted. For ryght as whan any person taketh wyllynge to be sobre, and throweth that awaye, wyllynge to be dronke, or els taketh wyll of drynkynge oute of measure, whiche thyng anon as it is doone, maketh throwe his owne gylte by free wyll that leseth hys grace. In which thyng therfore vpon the nobley of grace I mote trusten, and my bulye cure set thylke grace to kepe, that my free wyl otherwyse than by reason it shulde werche, cause not my grace to voyde: for thus must I both loke to free wyll & to grace. For ryght as naturall vsage in engendrynge of chyldren maye not bene without father, ne also but with the mother, for neyther father ne mother in begettynge maye it lacke: ryght so grace and free wyll accorden, and without hem both maye not louynge wyll in no partye ben getten. But yet is not free wyl in getynge of that thyng, to me hell thanke worthy as is grace, ne in the kepynge therof, so moche thanke deserueth, and yet in gettyng and kepynge both done they accorde.

Truly oftentyme grace free wyll helpeth to foredoinge of contrarye thynges, that to wyllynge loue not accorden, and strengthe wyll aduersities to withstytte, wherfore all togyther to grace owyth to bene accepted, that my wyllynge deserueth. Free wyll to louynge in this wyse is accorded.

I remembre me well howe all this boke (who so hede taketh) consydreth all thynges to werchynges of mankynde, euenlye accordeth, as in tourmynge of thys worde loue into trouth, or els ryght wisnesse, whether that it lyke. For what thynge that taketh to man in helpynge of free arbytremēt, thylke ryght wysnesse to take or els to kepe, throwe whiche a man shall be saued, of whiche thyng all this booke menegon hath maked, in euery poynt therof grace owyth to be thanked.

Wherfore I saye, euerye wyght hauynge

this ryghtfulnes ryghtfull is, and yet therfore I ley not in my conceyence, that to all ryghtfull is behoten the blysse euerlastynge but to hem that ben ryghtfull wythouten any vnryghtfulnesse. Some man after som degree maye ryghtfully ben accompted: as chaste men in lyuynge, and yet ben they tangiers and full of enuye pressed: to hem shal this blysse neuer bene delyuered. For ryght as verye blysse is without all maner nede, ryght so to noman shal it be yeuen but to the ryghtful, boyde from all maner vnryghtfulnesse founde, so noman to her blysse shal ben folowed, but he be ryghtfull, and wyth vnryghtfulnesse not bounde, and in that degre fully be knowe. This ryghtfulnesse in as moche as in hym selfe is, of none euyll is it cause, and of all maner goodnesse truly it is mother. This helpeth the spryte to withsyt the leude lustes of fleshly lykyng: This strengtheth and mayntayneth the lawe of kynde and yf that otherwhyle me weneth harme of this precyous thyng to folowe, therethorowe is nothynge the cause of som what els commeth it aboute who so taketh hede. By ryghtfulnesse forsoth were many holy sayntes good fauour in swetnesse to god almighty e, but that to some folkes they weren sauour of deth into deedly ende, that come not of the sayntes ryghtwysnesse, but of other wycked mens badnesse hath proceded. Truly the like wyl whiche that the ladye of loue me lerned, affectiõ of wyl to nempne, which is in wyllyng of profytable thynges, euel is it not, but whan to fleshly lustes it coseuteth avenst reason of soule. But that this thyng more clerely be vnderstand, it is for to know whence and how thylke wyll is so vycious, and so readye, euyll dedes to perfourme.

Grace at the gynnyng ordeyned thylke wyl in goodnesse euer to haue endured, and neuer to badnesse to haue assented: Men shoulde not beleue that God thylke wyll made to be vycious. Our fyrst father as Adam & Eue, for vycyous appetytes and vycious wyll to such appetytes consentyng, ben not one thig in kynde, other thyng is done for the other. And howe this wyll fyrst into man fyrst assented I holde it profytable to shewe, but if the fyrste condicyon of reasonable creature wol be consydred and apertly loked lyghtly the cause of suche wyll may ben shewed.

Intention of God was that ryghtfully and blyssed shulde reasonable nature ben maked hym selfe for to kepe, but neyther blyssfull ne ryghtfull myght it not be withouten wyl in them bothe. wyll of ryghtfulnesse is thylke same rightfulnesse as heretofore is shewed but wyll of blysse is not thylke blysse, for euery man hath not thylke blysse, in whome the wyll therof is abydynge. In this blysse after euery vnderstandyng is sufficyaunce of couenable commodityes without anye maner nede, whether it be blysse of aungelles or els thylke, that grace fyrst in paradyse suffered Adam to haue. For although aungelles blysse be more than Adams was in Paradyse, yet may it not be denyed, that Adam in Paradyse ne hadde sufficyaunce of blysse, for ryght as great herte is without al maner of coldnesse, and yet maye an other herte more heate haue, ryght so nothyng defended Adam in Paradyse to bene blessed without al maner nede. Although aungels blysse be moche more, forsothe it folowyth not lasse than an other to haue therefore hym nedeth, but for to wante a thynge whiche that behoueth to ben had, that may nede ben cleped, and that was not in Adam at the fyrst gynnynge. God and the Margarye, weten what I meane.

Forsothe where as is nede there is wretchednesse, good withoute cause to fornegoinge made not resonable creature wretched, for hym to vnderstand and loue had he fyrst maked. God made therfore mã blyssed without al maner indigẽce, togyther and at ones take reasonable creature blysse, and wyll of blyssednesse and wyl of rightfulnesse, which is ryghtfulnesse it selfe, and lybertye of arbitrement, that is free wyl, with which thilke ryghtfulnesse may be kept and lese. So and in that wyse ordayned thylke two, that wyl which that instrument is cleped, and here to forne mencyon is maked, shoulde vse thylke ryghtfulnesse by teachynge of hys soule to good maner of gouernaunce, in thought and in wordes, and that it shulde vse the blysse in obedyent maner withouten any incommodite. Blysse forsothe into mannes profyte, and ryghtwysnesse into his worshyppe god delyuered at ones: but ryghtfulnes so was yeuen, that man myght it lese, whiche yf he not lost hadde not, but continually haue it

hat, i

kepte, he shulde haue deserued the auaunce-
ment into the felowshyp of angels, in which
thinge yf he that loste, neuer by hym selfe for-
warde shuld he it mowe ayenward recouer:
and as well the blysse that he was in, as an-
gels blysse that to hym wardes was coming
shulde be nome at ones, & he depryued of the
both. And thus fyl man vnto likenesse of vn-
reasonable beestes, and with hem to corrup-
cyon and vnlustye appetytes was he vnder-
throwen, but yet wyl of blysse dwelleth, that
by indigence of goodes whiche that he loste
through great wretchednesse, by ryght shuld
he bene punyshed. And thus for he weyued,
ryghtfulnes, lost hath he hys blysse: but faile
of hys desyre in hus owne comoditie may he
not, and were comodities to hys resonable
nature whych he hath lost may he not haue.
To false lustes, which ben bestial appetites
he is turned: foly of vnconning hath hym be-
gyled, in wening that thylke bene the como-
dities that owen to bene desyred. This affec-
cion of wyll by libertie of arbitrament is en-
duced to wylne thys thing that he shuld not
and so is wyl not maked ryvll but vnryght-
ful, by absence of rightfulnesse, whych thing
by reason euer shulde be haue. And freenesse
of arbitrament maye be not wylne, whan he
it not haueth, for whyle he it hadde, thylke
halpe it not to kepe: so ỳ wythout grace may
it not bene recouered. Wyll of comoditie, in
as much as vnryghtful it is maked, by wyl-
lynge of vnrill lustes, wyllynge of goodnesse
may be not wylne: for wyll of instrument to
affection of wyl is thralled, sythen that other
thyng maye it not wylne, for wyll of instru-
ment to affection desyreth, and yet bene both
they wyl cleped: for ỳ instrumẽt wolle, throu3
affection it wylneth, and affection desyreth
thylke thynge whereto instrumente hym le-
deth. And so frewil to vnlusty affectiõful ser
uaunt is maked, for vnryghtfulnesse may be
not reieue, & wythout ryghtfulnes full fredõ
may it neuer haue. For kyndly libertie of ar-
bytrument without it, beyne and ydell is for
sothe. wherfore yet I saye, as often haue I
sayd the same, whan instrument of wyl lost
hath rightfulnesse, in no maner but by grace
may he aven returne ryghtfulnesse to wylne
For sythen nothyng but ryghtfulnesse alone
shulde be wylne, what ỳ euer he wylneth wh
oute ryghtfulnesse, vnryghtfullye he it wyl-
neth. These than vnryghtfull appetites and
vnlustyly lustes which the flyes desyreth, in
as moche as they bene in kynde, bene they
not bad, but they ben vnryghtful and badde
for they ben in resonable creature, where as
they beyng in no waye shulde bene suffred.
In vnreasonable beastes neyther bene they
yuell ne vnryghtfull, for there is theyr kynde
beyng.

NOwen maye it wel bene
nowe, of these thynges to
forne declared, that man
hathe not alwaye thylke
ryghtfulnesse, whyche by
dutie of ryghte euermore
hauen he shulde, & by no
way by hym selfe may he get ne kepe, and af-
ter he it hath if he it lese, recouer shal he it ne-
uer, without especial grace: wherto3 the co-
mune sẽtence of the people in opinion, ỳ eue-
ry thing after destiny is ruled, false and wic-
ked is to bileue: For though predestinacyon
be as wel of good as of badde, sythen that it
is sayde God hadneth made, whych he neuer
ne wrought but for he suffreth hem to be ma-
ked, as that he hardeth whan he naught mis-
sayth, or letteth into temptation whan he not
delyuereth, wherfore it is none incõuenient
yf in that maner be sayd, God to forne haue
destenyed borthe badde, & her badde werkes
whan hem ne theyr yuel dedes neyther amẽ-
deth ne therto hem grace leueth. But pe-
allyche predestinacion of goodnesse alone is
sayde by these great clerkes, for in him God
doth that they bene, & that in goodnesse they
werchen. But the negatyle hereof in badnesse
is holde, as the lady of loue hath me lerned,
who so aryght in thys boke loketh. And ve-
terly it is to weten, that predestinacyon pro-
perly in God maye not bene demed, no more
than beforne wetynge. For in the chapiter of
gods beforne wetynge, as loue me tel cessed,
al these maters apertly may ben fownde. All
thinges to god ben nowe togither and in pre-
sence during. Trewly presence & predestina-
cyon in nothyng discorden, wherfore as I
was lerned how gods beforewetyng & free
choyce of wyll mowe stonden togyther, me
thinketh the same reason me leadeth, that de
streyne and fre wyll accorden, so that neyther
of hem both to other in nothing contrarieth

And reasonablelyche maye it not ben demed, as often as any thynge sayleth trewyl wetthyng, as yf a man another man wrongfully anoyeth, wherfore he him sleyth, that it be constrayned to that ende, as mokel folke cryeth and sayeth: Lo, as it was destenyed of God to some knowe, so it is thorowe necessytie fall, and otherwise myght it not betyde Trewly neyther he ꝑ the wronge wrought ne he that hym selfe venged, none of thyke thynges thorowe necessitie wrought: for yf that wyth freewyll there had it not wylled, neyther had wrought that he perfourmed: so vtterly grace ꝑ freewyll in goodnesse bringeth and kepeth, and fro badnesse it tucheth, in all thynge moost thanke deserueth. Thys grace maketh stedfaste in vertue to abide, wherfore in body and in soule in full plentie of comyng after theyr good deseruyng in the eure lastyng ioy, after the daye of dome shul they endelesse dwell, and they shul bene learned in that kyngdome wyth so mokel affect of loue and of grace, that the lesse ioy shall of the greatest in glorye reioyce and bene gladded, as if he the same ioye had. What wonder lyth, God is the greatest loue, and ꝑfore ought to loke thynges wyth reasonynge to proue, and so is instrument of wyll, wyll: and yet varyeth he from effecte and dysyre both. Affection of wyl also for wyll is cleped, but it varyeth for instrument in thys maner wyse, by that name lyche whan it commeth into mynde a none ryght it is in wyllyng deuyed, and the negatyf therof with wyllyng wyl not accord thus is closed in hart, thought vsage and instrument kepe. Thys kepeth whā instrumēt and vs waken and of suche maner affection trewly some man hath more and some man lesse. Certes trewe louers weren eure ther of to lytle to haue. False louers in lytle weren haue ryght mokel: Lo instrument of wyl in false and trewe both euen lyche is proporcionid, but affection is more in some place than in some, because of the goodnesse that folowyth, and that I thinke hereafter to declare. Use of thys instrument is wyl, but it taketh hys name whan wylued thyng is in doyng. but vtterly grace to catche in thy blysse, destred to ben rewarded. Thou must haue than affection of wyl at the ful, and vse whan hys tyme asketh wisely to ben gouerned. Sothly my disciple wythout feruente affection of wyll may no man bene saued: thys affection of good seruyce in good loue, maye not bene groūded, without feruent desire to the thing in wyll conceyued. But he that neuer reccheth to haue or not to haue, affection of wyll in ꝑ hath no restyng place wherfor whan thyng cometh to mynde, and it be not taken in hede to comyn or not come, therfore in that place affection sayleth: and for thyke affection is so lytle, thorowe which us goodnesse he shulde come to his grace, the ydelnesse wyl not suffre to auaile by no way us to his helpes: Certes grace and reason thyke affection folowyth Thys affection with reason knytte, dureth in euerych trewe herte, and euermore is encreasyng, no feerdnesse no strength maye it remoue wherie truthe in hert abydeth. Sothly whan falsheed gynneth entre, truth drawyth away, grace and loue both: but than thilke falsheed that trouth hath thus voyded, hath vnkut the bonde of vnderstondyng reason, bet wene wyl and the hert. And who so that bonde vndoth, and vnknytteth wyl to be in other purpose thā to ꝑ first accorde, knytteth hym with cōtrary of reason, and that is vnreason. Lo, than wyl and vnreason bringeth a man from the blysse of grace, wherch thing of pure kynde, euery man ought to shonne and to eschewe, and to the knot of wyl and reason contynue. Perchaunce (ꝑ she) by thy dudum lokes, thou wenest in these wordes me to contrarien, from other sayenges here to fore in other place as whā thou were sometyme in affection of wyl, to thynges ꝑ nowe han brought the in disease, whiche I haue ꝑ counsayred to voyde, and thyne herte discouert, and there I made thy wyl to ben chaunged, whyche nowe thou wenest I argue to wythholde and to kepe. Sothly I say that reuers in these wordes may not ben founde: for thoughe dronkennesse be forboden, men shul not alway ben drunkelesse. I trowe right for thou thy wil out of reasō shuld not turne thy wyll in one reason shulde not vnbynde, I saye thy wyll in thy fruit purpose with vnreason was closed: Construe we forthe of the remenante what the good lyketh. Trewly that wyll and reason shulde be knutte togyther was fre wyl of reasō, after tyme thyne herte is assentaunt to them both, thou myghte not chaunge, but yf thou from rule of reason varye, in whyche varyaunce to come to thyke

blysse

blysse desyred, cõtrariously thou wercheſt: & no thyng may knowe wyl & reaſo. but loue alone. Than yf thou boyd loue, than weueſt the bonde that knytteth, and ſo nedes or els eyght lyghtly, þ other gone a ſondre: wherfore thou ſeeſt apertly that loue holdeth this knot, & amayſtreth hem to be bounde. These thynges, as a tynge in circuite of wrethe ben knytte in thy ſoule wythout departynge. I let be, let be (q I) it nedeth not of this no reherſayle to make, my ſoule is yet in parfyte blysse, in thynkynge of that knotte.

NOw trewly lady I haue my groũde well vnderſtand, but what thyng is þ thylke ſpire that in to a tree ſhulde were: expowne me þ thynge, what ye therof meane. That ſhall I (q ſhe) blythly, & take good hede to the wordes I the rede. Cõtinuaunce in thy good ſeruice, by longe proceſſe of tume in ful hope abiding, wythout any chaung to wyne in thyne hert: this is the ſpire, whych yf it be wel kept & gouerned, ſhall ſo hugely ſpryng, tyl the fruite of grace is plentuously out ſprongen: for although thy wyl be good yet may not therfore thilke bliſſe deſyred haſtely on the diſcemde, it muſt abyde hys ſeſonable tyme. And ſo by proceſſe of growyng, wyth thy good trauayle, it ſhall in to more & more were, tyll it be founde ſo myghty, that windes of yuel ſpech, ne of ſtormes of enuy, make not the trauayle ouerthrow, ne troſtes of myſtruſte, ne bayes of ielouſy tyght lytle myght haue in harmyng of ſuche ſpringes. Euery younge ſetlynge lyghtly wyth ſmale ſtormes is a peryed, but whan it is woren ſombele in greteneſſe, than han great blaſtes and wethers but lytle myght, any diſauaun tage to them for to werch. Myne owne loue tayne lady (q I) and welth of myne herte, & it were lykynge vnto your noble grace, therthrouz not to be diſpleaſed, I ſuppoſe ye erten, now ye make ielouſy enuy, & diſturbour to hem that ben your ſeruaunces. I haue lerned ofte to forne this tyme, that in euery louers hert, greate plente of ielouſyes greues ben ſowe, wherfore me thinketh ye ne ought in no maner accompte, thylke thyng among theſe other welked wyners and venomous ſerpentes, as enuy, miſtruſt, and yuel ſpeche

O foole (q ſhe) miſtruſt with foly with yuel wyl medled, engendreth that welked paddc. Trewly yf they were diſtroyed, ielouſye vndone were for euer, & yet ſome maner of ielouſy I wote wel is euer redy in all the hertes of my trew ſeruaunces, as thus: to be ielous ouer hym ſelfe, leſte he be cauſe of hys owne diſeaſe. Thys ielouſy in full thoughte euer ſhulde be kepte for ferdneſſe to leſe hys loue by miſkepyng, throwe his owne beyng in leudeneſſe, or els thus: Leſt ſhe that thou ſerueſte ſo feruently is beſet there her better lyketh, that of al thy good ſeruyce ſhe compteth not a creſſe. These ielouſyes in herte for acceptable qualities ben demed theſe oughten euery trew louer by kindly, euermore haue in his minde, tyll fully the grace & bliſſe of my ſeruice be on hym diſcended at wyll.

And he that than ielouſy catcheth, or els by wenyng of hys owne folyſh wyttinneſſe miſtaketh, truely wyth fantaſy of penynne, he is ſone begyled. Yuel wyll hathe gebounden thylke mater of ſorowe in hys leude ſoule, & yet not for thi to euery wight ſhulde me not truſte, ne euery wyghte fully miſbeleue. the meane of theſe thynges oweth to be vſed.

Worthy wythouten cauſe all euidence, myſtruſte in ielouſye ſhulde not be wenged in to wyſe perſon comenly, ſuch leude wickednes ſhulde me not fynde. He that is wyſe & with yuell wyll not be acomered, can abyde well hys tyme, tyl grace & bliſſe of his ſeruice folowyng, haue hym ſo mokel eaſed, as his abyding to forehande hath hym diſeaſed. Certes lady q I tho of no thyng me wondreth ſythen thylke bliſſe ſo precious is and kyndly good, & wel is and worthy in kynde, what it is medled with longe & reaſo, as ye to forne haue declared. Why, anone as hye one is ſprongc, why ſpringeth not the other and anone as the one cometh, why receyueth not the other? For euery thyng that is out of his kyndly place, by full appetite, euer commeth thytherwarde kyndly to draw, & his kyndly being therto him cõſtrayneth. And the kindly ſteede of this bliſſe, is in ſuche wyl medled to vnbyde, & nedes in that it ſhulde haue hys kyndly beyng. wherfore me thynketh anone as that wyll to be ſhewed & kydde hym profeeth, thylke bliſſe ſhulde him hye thylke wil to receyue, or els kynde of goodneſſe worche not in hem as they ſhulde. Lo, be the ſunne

neuer

neuer so ferre, euer it hathe hys kynde wetching in erth: great weyght on hye onloft caryed, stynteth neuer tyll it come to thys restyng place. waters to the see ward euer ben they drawyng, thynge that is lyght bi thy wyl not synke, but euer ascendeth & vpward draweth. Thus kynde in euery thynge hys kyndely course, & hys beyng place sheweth: wherfore be kynde on thys good wyl, anone as it were sprynge, this bysshe shulde theron discend, her kynde wolde they dwelleden togyther, & so haue ye sayd your selfe. Certes (q̄ she) thyne herte sytteth wonder sore this bysshe for to haue, thyne hert is sore agreued that it taryeth so longe, and yf thou durst est, as me thynketh by thyne wordes, this bysshe woldest thou blame. But yet I saye, thylke bysshe is kyndly good, and hys kyndly place in that wyl to bubyde. Neuer the later, their comyng togyther after kyndes ordynaunce not sodaynly may betyde, it must abide tyme as kynde reuerth hym leaue for yf a man, as thys wyl medled gonne hym shew, & thylke bysshe in hast folowed, so lyghtly comming shulde lyghtlye cause goynge, longe tryne of chastysyng, causeth drynke to be the more delycious whan it is atasted. Howe is it q̄ I (sayd) that so many bysshes se I al day at mine eye, in the fyrst moment of a syght with such wyl accorde. Yee, and yet other whyle wyth wyl alienateth, synguleryly by hym selfe there reason sayleth, traueyle was none, seruyce had no tyme. Thys is a queynt maner thyng howe suche doyng cometh aboute. Q̄ she) that is thus, the earth kyndely after seasons & tymes of the yere, bryngeth forth innumerable herbes and trees both profytable and other, but such as men ryght leaue, though they were naught in no rythynge to mannes kynde serue, or els such as turnen soone vnto mennes confusion in case that therof they atast comen forthe out of the earthe by theyr owne kynde, wythoute any mannes cure or any busynesse in traueyle: and thylke herbes that to mennes lyuelode necessaryly serue, wythout whyche goodlye in thys lyfe creatures mowen not endure, and moolte bene nourysshen to mankinde, wythout great traueyle, great tylth, and longe abydyng tyme, comen not out of the earth, and it with seede to some ordeyned such herbes to make sprig and forth growe. Ryght so the perfyte bysshe, that we haue in meanyng of durying time to abyde maye not come so lyghtlye, but wyth great traueyle and ryght besytyth, and yet good seed to be sowe, for ofte the croppe fayleth of bad seed, be it neuer so wel traueyled. And thylke bysshe thou spoke of so lyghtly in cōming, truely is not necessary nor abiding: and but it the better be stamped, and the venomous teuse out wrongen, it is likely to enpoysonen all tho that therof tasten. Certes ryght bytter bene the herbes ỳ shewen fyrste the yere of her owne kynde. well the more is the harueste that yelden many graynes, tho longe & sore it hath ben traueyled what woldest thou deme if a mā wold yeue thre quarters of nobles of gold, that were a precious gyfte. Yee certes (q̄ I). And what q̄ she) thre quarters full of peerles. Certes (q̄ I) were a ryche gift. And what q̄ she) of asure. Quod I a precious gyfte at ful. were not q̄ she) a noble gyfte of all these at ones. In good fayth q̄ I) for wantyage of englyth nampyng of so noble a worde. I can not for preciousnesse yeue it a name. Ryghtfully q̄ she) hast thou demed, and yet soure knytte in bertue, passeth al the golde in thys erth. Good wil accordant to reason, with no maner properte may be countreuayled, all the asure in the worlde is not to accompt in respecte of reason. soure that with good wyll & reason accordeth, wyth no earthly ryches may not ben amended. Thys yefte hath thou yeuen I know it my self and thy Margarete thilke gyft hath receiued, in the which thing to reward she hath her selfe bounde. But the gyfte as I sayd, by no maner ryches may be amended. wherfore wyth thynge ỳ may not be amended, thou shalt of thy margaretes right wiseneslle be rewarded. Right sufficed yet neuer but euery good dede some to be yolde. Al wold thy Margarete with no reward the quite. Ryght that neuer more dieth thy mede in merythe woll purueye. Certes such sodaine bysshe as thou first nēpnest, yet wyl hem reward as the well is worthy, and though at thyne eye it semeth the reward ỳ desert to passe, right can after sende such bretennes euely it to reward: so ỳ sodayne bysshe by alwaies of reason in great goodnes may not ben accompted, but bysshe long, both long it abydeth, & endelesse it wol last. Se why the wyl is endelesse, for if thou lourdest euer, thy

wyll

wyll is euer there tabyde and neuer more to chaunge: euenhed of reward must ben done by ryght, than muste nedes thy grace & thys blisse endeles in ioy to bnbide. Cuélich disese asketh euélych ioy, which hastely thou shalt haue. I (q I) it sufficeth not thá a long good wyll, be it neuer so wel with reason medled, but yf it be in good seruice longe trauayled. And so throuz seruice shul men come to ꝑ ioy and this me thynketh shulde be the wering tree of whiche ye first meued.

VEry trouth (q she) hast thou now cõceyued of these thinges in thyne hert hastely shalt thou be able very ioye & parfite blysse to receyue. And nowe I wote wel thou desyrest to know ꝑ maner of braũches, that out of the tree shulde spring. Ther of lady (q I) hertely I you pray: for thá leue I woll, that right soone after I shall ataste of the fruite that I so longe haue desyred.

Thou haste herde (quod she) in what wyse this tree to forne this haue I declared, as in grounde and in stocke of wering. First the grounde shuld be thy fre wyl ful in thine hert & the stocke as I said shuld be continuance in good seruice by longe time in traueyle, tyl it were in greatnesse right wel woxen. And whan this tree such greatnesse hath caught, as I haue rehersed: the braunches than that the fruite shulde forth bring, spech must they be nedes in voice of prayer, in complayning wise vsed. But alas (q I) tho he is sorouful ꝛ wounded that hyderth his spech and spareth his complayntes to make, what shall I speke ꝑ care but payne euen lyke to hell, fore hath me assayled, & so fersly the in payne me thronge, that I leue my tree is sere, & neuer shal it fruite forth bringe. Certes he is greatly eased, that dare his priuy mone discouer to a trewe felowe, that cõmune hath & myght wherethrough his playnt in any thyng maye be amẽded. And moche more is he ioyed that with herte of hardyneste dare complayne to his Lady, what cares ꝑ he suffereth, by hope of mercy with grace to be auanced. Trewly I saye for me, syth I came this Margarite to serue, durst I neuer me discouer of no maner disease, and wel the later hathe myne hert hardied such thinges to done, for ꝑ gret benuntes & worthy refreshmentes that she of ꝑ grace goodly without any deserte on my halue ofte hath me reckened, & nere her goodnesse the more wyth grace and wyth mercy medled, whiche passen al deserres, traueyls, and seruunges, that I in any degree mighte endyte, I wolde wene I shulde be wythout recouer, in gettynge of thys blysse for euer. Thus haue I styled my disease, thus haue I couered my care, that I brenne in sorowfull anoy, as gledes and coles wasten a fyre vnder deed asshen. Well the hoter is the fyre, that wyth asshen it is ouerlern: ryght longe this wo haue I suffred. Lo (q Loue) howe thou farest: me thynketh ꝑ palasy yuel bathe acoinered thy wittes, as faste as thou hyest forwarde, anone sodaynly backwarde thou moues: Shall not yet al thy leudnesse out of thy braynes & dull bene thy skylfull vnderstadynges, thy wyll hath thy wyt so a maystred. woste thou not well (q she) but euerye tree in hys seasonable tyme of burionynge shewe his blomes fro hun, in sygne of what fruite shulde out of hun springe, els the fruite for ꝑ were men halte delyuered, be ꝑ grounde neuer so good. And thoun the stock be mighty at the full, and the braunches seet and no burions shewe, farwell the gadiner be may pipe in an yue leafe his fruite is failed. wherfore thy braunches must burionen in presence of thy Lady, yf thou desyre any fruite of thy ladyes grace, but beware of thy lyfe, ꝑ thou no wodelaye vse, as in askynge of thynges that stretchen in to shame, for than myghte thou not spede by no waye that I can espy. Vertue woll not suffre byllanye out of hym selfe to springe. Thy woordes maye not be queynt ne of subtell maner vnderstandynge. Fre wytted people supposen in suche poesyes to be begyled, in open vnderstandynge muste euery worde be vsed. Voyce wythout clere vnderstandynge of sentence sayeth Aristotle, ryght naught punteth in herte. Thy wordes than to a byde in herte, & clene in ful sentence of trew meaning plattly must thou shewe & euer be obedient, her hestes and her wyls to perfourme, and be thou set in such a wyse to wete by a loke euer more what she meaneth. And he that lyste not to speke, but stilly his disease suffre: what wõder is it tho he come neuer to his blisse, who ꝑ traueileth vnwyst, & coueyteth thing vnknowe, vnwetinge he shal be quyted, and wyth vnknowe thynge rewarded. Good Lady (q I) than it

bath

hath oft ben sene, that wethers & stormes so hugely haue fal in burionynge tyme, and by parte bureile han beaten of the sprynges so clene, wherthrough the frute of thylke yere hath sayled. It is a great grace whan bur tons bē good wethers, their frutes forth to bynge. Alas than after such stormes howe harde is it to auoyde, tyll elte wedrynge and yeres han maked her circute cours al about, er any frute be able to be tasted he is shente for shame, þ soule is rebuked of hys speche. He that is in fyre brenning sore smarteth for disease. Hym thynketh ful longe er the water come, that shulde the fyre quenche. Whyle men gone after a leche, the body is buryed. Lo howe semely this frute wereth, me thinketh that of tho frutes maye no man atalle, for pure bytternesse in sauour. In thys wyse bothe frute and the tree wasten away togy ther, though moche bely occupation haue be spent to bynge it so forforth, that it was a ble to spring. A lyte speche hath maked that al thys labour is in yden. I not (q she) wher of it semeth thy question to assoyle, me thinketh the nowe duller in wittes, than whā I with the furst mette, although a mā be semde comenly for a foole he is not demen, but if he no good wol lerne, sottes & fooles let lightly out of mynd, þ good that men teacheth hem. I sayde the tree thy flocke muste be strong and in good stalle well herted, the tree is full feble that at the fyrste dente falleth: and al though frute faileth one yere or two, yet shal suche a season come one tyme or other, that shall bynge out feure that is nothynge pre terit ne passed there is nothyng future ne cō mynge, but all thynges togyther in that place bene present euerlastynge wythout any me uynge, wherfore to God al thing is as now: and thoughe a thynge be nat in kyndely na ture of thinges as yet, and yf it shuld be here after, yet euermore we shulde say God it ma keth be time present, and nowe for no future ne preterit in hym maye be founde. wherfore hys wetynge and hys before wetynge, is al one in understandyng. Tha yt wetyng & be fore wetyng of God putteth in necessite to al thinges whiche he wotte or before wotte ne thyng after eternite, or els after any time he woll or dothe of libertie but all of necessitie, which thing if thou wene it be ayenst reason not thorowe necessitie to be or not to be, all thynge that God wot or before wot, to be or not to be, & yet nothyng defendeth any thing to be wyll or to be before wyst of hym in our wyllies or oure doinges to be done, or els cō mynge to be for fre arbitrement. whan thou hast these declarations wel understand, thā shalt thou fynde it resonable at proue, & that many thinges be not thorowe necessitie, but thorowe libertie of wyll, saue necessitie of fre wyl, as I to forne sayde: & as me thynketh al bitterly declared. Me thynketh lady (q I) so I shulde you not displease, & euermore your reuerence to kepe, that these thynges cōtra rien in any understanding for ye sayne som tyme is thorowe libertie of wyll & also tho rowe necessitie. Of this haue I yet no sauour without better declaration. what wōder (q she) is there in these thynges, sythen al daye thou shalte se at thyne eye, in many thynges receyuen in hem selfe reuers thorowe diuers reasons, as thus. I praye the (q she) which thinges bene more reuers than comen and gone. For yf I bydde the come to me, & thou come, after whan I bydde the go and thou go, thou reuersest fro thy fyrst commynge. That is soth (q I) & yet (q she) in thy fyrste alone by diuers reason was full reuersynge to understande. As howe (q I) That shall I shewe the (q she) by ensample of thynges that haue kyndely mouynge. Is there anye thinge that meueth more kyndely than doth the heuens eye whyche I clepe the sunne. Soothly (q I) me semeth it moost kyndly to moue. Thou sayest soth (q she) Thā if thou loke to the sunne, in what parte he be vnder heuen, euermore he heigheth him in mouing fro thylke place, and heygheth meuynge to warde thylke same place, to thylke place frō whyche he goth he heigheth commynge, and wythout any ceasynge to that place he nei heth frō which he is chaunged & withdraw. But nowe in these thynges after diuersitie of reason, reuers in one thyng may be sey with out repugnaunce. wherfore in the same wise wythout anye repugnaunce by my reasons to forne maked, al is one to beleue, somthinge to be thorowe necessitie commynge, for it is cōminge, and yet wyth no necessitie cōstray ned to be commyng, but wyth necessitie that cometh out of fre wyll, as I haue sayd. Tho lyft me a lytle to speke, & gan hynt my penne of my writyng, & sayd in this wyse. Trewly

lady

lady as me thinketh, I can allege authorites great ꝑ contrary your sayenges. Job sayeth of mannes person, thou hast put hys terme, wherby thou mygte not passe. Then saye I that no man may shorte ne lengthe the day ordayned of hys doyng, although sometyme to hys semeth some man to do a thynge of free wyl, wherthorow hys deth be henteth. Naye forsoth (q she) it is nothynge ayenst my sayenge for god is not begyled, ne he seeth nothynge whether it shal come of lyberte or els of necessite, yet it is said to be ordeyned at godammonable, which at mās or it be done may be chaūged. Such thyng also is that ꝑaule the apostel sayeth of hem that tofore were purposed to be sayntes, as thus, whych that god before wyst, & hath predestined, conformes of ymages of hys sonne, that he shulde be the fyrste begoten, that is to say, here amonges many brethrē, & whom he hath predestyned, hem he hath cleped, and whō he hath cleped, hem he hath iustifyed, & whom he hath iustified, hem he hath magnifyed. This purpose after whiche they ben cleped sayntes or holy in ꝑ euerlastyng prefet, wherin neither tyme passed ne tyme cōmynge, but euer it is only presente, & nowe as moche a moment as seuen thousande wynter, & so ayenwarde worthouten any meuyng is nothynge lych temporel presence, forthyge ꝑ there is euer present. Yet amōges you mē er it be in your presence it is mouable tho towe lyberte of arbytremēt. And right as in the euerlastyng present no maner thing was ne shalde, but only is, & nowe here in your tēporel tyme somethyng was & is, & shalde, but mouynge stoundes, & in thys is no maner repugnaunce. Right so in the euerlastynge presence nothynge may be chaūged: & in your tēporel tyme other while it is proued mouable by lyberte of wil or it be do, worthouté any inconuenience therof to folowe. In your tēporel tyme is no such presence as in the tother, for your present is done, when passed & to come gynne entre, whych tymes here amōges you euerych easely folowyth other, but ꝑ presence euerlastyng dureth in onehed, worthout any ymaginable chaūgyng, & euer is present and nowe. Truely the course of the planetes & ouerwhelmynges of the sonne in dayes & nightes, with a new gynnyng of his circute after he is ended, that is to sayne, one yere to folow another. These maken your trāsitory tymes wyth chaūgyng of lyues & mutation of people. But right as your tēporel presence couereth euery place, & al thinges in euery of your tymes be cōteyned, & as now both sey & wyst to goddes dery knowynge. Then (q I) me wōdreth why ꝑaule spake these wordes, by voice of significatiō in tyme passed, that god his sayntes before wyst, hath predestined, hath cleped, hath iustifyed, & hath magnifyed: me thynketh he shulde haue sayde tho wordes in tyme present, & that had be more accordaunt to the euerlastynge present, thē to haue spoke in preterit voice of passed vnderstandynge.

O (q Loue) by these wordes I se well thou hast lytel vnderstādyng of ꝑ euerlastyng presence, or els of my before spoken wordes. for neuer a thyng of tho thou hast nēpned was to fore other or after other, but all at ones euenlych at ꝑ god bē, & al together in ꝑ euerlastig present be nowe to vnderstādyng the eternal presence, as I sayd, hath enclose together in one, al tymes, in which close & one al thinges ꝑ ben in dyuers tymes & in dyuers places tēporel wythout posteriozite or priozite be closed therin perpetuel nowe, & maked to dwel in present sight. But there thou sayest ꝑaule shulde haue spoke thilke forsaid sentence by tyme present, & that most shulde haue ben accordaunt to the euerlastyng presence, why gabbest thou to thy wordes. Sothly I say ꝑaul moued ꝑ wordes by significatio of tyme passed to shewe fully ꝑ thylke wordes were not put for tēporel signification for al thilke tyme were not thilke sentēce tēporallich borne to be: che that ꝑaule pronounced god haue tofore knowe, & haue cleped them magnifyed: wherthorow it may wel be know that ꝑaule vsed tho wordes of passed significatiō, for nede & lacke of a word in mānes bodely speche betokenyng the euerlastynge presence. And therfore worde is moste semelyche in lykenesse to euerlastynge presence, he toke his sentēce for thynges that here before ben passed vtterly be immouable, ylyke to ꝑ euerlasting presence. As thylke that ben there neuer mowe not be present, so thinges of time passed ne mowe in no wyse not be passed: but al thinges in your tēporal presence that passen in a lytel while shullen ben not present. So then in that it is more similitude to the euerlastyng presence, signifyeacion of tyme passed, then of tyme tēporal present, & so more in accordaunce.

In this maner what thyng of these that ben don thorow fre arbytremēt, or els as necessa ry, holy wrytte pronounceth, after eternite he speketh, in which presence is euerlastyng ioye and nothyng but sothe immouable, not after tyme, in which nought alway ben youre wyls & youre acts, & right as while they be nat, it is not nedeful hem to be: so oft it is not ned full that somtyme they shulde be. As how (quod I) for yet muste I be lerned by some ensample Of loue (quod she) wolt I nowe ensample make, sythen I know the heed knotte in that yelke. Lo, somtyme thou wrytest no arte, ne arte then in no wyll to wryte. And right as whyle thou wrytest not, or els wol not write it is not nedeful the to wryte, or els wyne to wryte. And for to make the knowe better yet, al thynges ben otherwyse in the euerlastyng pre sence the in temporall tyme: se nowe my good chylde, for somthynge is in the euerlastynge presence, then in tempoel tyme, it was not in eternite tyme, in eternе presence shal it not be Then no reason defendeth, that somthyng ne maye be in tyme temporall mouynge, that in eterne is immouable. For sothe it is nomore contrarye ne reuers for to be mouable in tyme tempotal, and mouable in eternite, then not to be in any tyme, and to be alway in eternite and haue to be or els to come in tyme tempo rel, & not haue be ne nought comyng to be in eternite. Yet neuer the later, I saye not som thynge to be neuer in tyme tepotel, that euer is eternite, but al onely in somtyme not to be. For I saye not thy loue to moone in no tyme to be, but to day alone I deny ne it to be, and yet neuer the later it is alwaye in eternite.

Also quod I it semeth to me that cōmyng thing or els passed here in youre tēporal tyme to be, in eternite euer nowe & presente owerth not to be demed, and yet folowerth nat thylke thynge, that was or els shalde, in no maner therto ben passed, or els cōmyng: then vtter ly shul we deny, for there wythout ceasyng, it is in hys present maner. O (quod she) myne owen disciple, now gynnest thou able to haue the name of my seruaunt. Thy wytte is cle red, away is now errour of cloude in vnco nyng, awaye is blyndnesse of loue, awaye is thoughtfull study, of medlyng maners hast ly shalte thou entre into the toye of me, that am thyne owne maystres. Thou haste quod she, in a fewe wordes, wel and clerely conclu ded moder of my mater. And right as ther is no reuers ne contrariousnesse in the thynges, right so wythoute any repugnaunce, it is sayd somthyng to be mouable in tyme temporel, & for it be, that in eternite dwelleth immouable not a for, it be or after that it is, but wythout ceasyng, for right no right is there after tyme, that same is there euerlastynge, that tēporal lyche somtyme nys, and tofore it be it maye not be, as I haue sayd. For sothlye (quod I) this haue I wel vnderstande, so that nowe me thynketh that prescience of god and fre arby tremēt wythouten any repugnaunce acciden, and that maketh the strength of eternite, which encloseth by presence durynge al tymes, and al thynges that ben, han ben, & shull ben in any tyme. I wolde nowe (quod I) a lyttel vnderstand sythen that all thyng thus tofore wot, whe ther thylke wetynge be of two thinges, or els thylke thynges ben to ben of goddes wetynge and so of god nothynge is: and yf euery thing be thorowe goddes wetynge, and fixt of take hys beynge, then should god be maker and au thor of badde werkes, & so he should not right fully punysshe yuell bonages of mankynde. (Quod I loue) I shal tel the thys lesson to lerne myne owne true seruaut. The noble phi losophicall poete, in Englysshe, whyche euer more hym beryeth and trauayleth right fore my name to encrese, wherfore al that wyllen me good, owe to do him worshyp & reuerence both truely has better ne has pere in schole of my rules coude I neuer fynde: Be (quod she) a treatyse that he made of my seruaut Troylus, hath thes mater touched, and at the full thys questyon alloyled. Certaynly hys noble say ynges can I not amende: In goodnes of ge tyll manyche speche, wythout any maner of nyrte of flatteres ymagination in wytte and in good reason of sentence he passeth al other makers. In the boke of Troylus, the answerte to thy questyon mayste thou lerne, neuer the later yet may I rychtly thyne vnderstandynge somdele ben lerned, if thou haue knowyng of these to forsayd thinges, with that thou haue vnderstandynge of two the last chapiters of thys seconde boke, that is to say, good to be som thyng, and bad to want al maner beynge, for badde is nothynge els but absence of good, & that god in good, maketh that good dedes be good, in yuel he maketh that they ben but naust that they ben bad: for to nothyng is badnesse

to be

to be. I haue (q I) tho enough knowig theri-
me nedeth of other thinges to here, ỳ is to say
how I shall come to my blysse so lõge desired

AS this mater to me declared
(q loue) I haue well shewed, ỳ
euery man hath fre arbytremẽt
of thynges in hys power to do
or vndo what hym lyketh. Out
of this grounde must come the spire that by
processe of tyme shall in greatnesse spede, to
haue braunches & blosmes of waryng frute
in grace, of whych the casse and the fauoure
is endelesse blysse in ioy euer to onbyde. Now
lady (q I) that tree to set fayne wold I lerne
Sothou shalt (q she) er thou departe hence.
The fyrst thynge thou must set thy werke on
grounde lyket and good, accordaunte to thy
spynges. For yt ỳ defyre grapes, thou goest
not to the hasell nor for to fetchen roses, thou
seest not on okes: and yf thou shalt haue ho-
ny soukles thou leauest the frute of the foure
dooke. Wherfore yf thou defyre this blysse in
parfyte ioye thou must set thy purpose there
vertue folowyth, and not to leke after the bo-
dely goodes as I sayd when thou were wry-
tyng in the seconde booke. And for thou shalt
set thy selfe in so noble a place and vtterly fo-
wed in thyne herte the vnrygoyng of thy full
purpose thys seteles is the ryver to spryngе,
and the more lyghter thy soule in grace to be
vnsted. And resolue thy defyre that is to saye
thy wyll, alwayes mote ben stedfaste in thys
mater without any chaungynge, for yf it be
stedfast no man may it voyde. Yes parde (q
I) my wyll maye ben turned by frendes and
by cause of manace & thretenyng in lesynge of
my lyfe and of my lymmes, & in many other
wyse that nowe cometh not to myndе. And
also it mote ofte ben out of thought for no re
membraunce may holde one thynge contynu-
ally in herte, be it neuer so lusty defyred.

Nowe se (q she) how thy wyl shal folowe
thy free wyl to be grounded cõtinuelly to abyde
It is thy free wil that thou louest and hast lo-
ued, and yet shal loue thys Margaryte perle,
and in thy wyl thou thinkest to holde it. The
is thy wyl knyt in loue not to chaunge for no
newe lust befyde: thys wyll teacheth thyne
herte fró al maner varyeng. But thó although
thou be thretened in deth or els in otherwyse
yet is it in thyne arbytremẽt to chose, thy loue
to voyde or els to holde. And thylke arbytre-
ment is in a maner a iugement betwene de-
syre and thy herte. And yf thou deme to loue
thy good wyl fayleth, then arte thou worthy
no blysse that good wyl shulde deserue: and if
thou chose contynuaunce in thy good seruyce
then thy good wyll abydeth, nedes blysse fo-
lowyng of thy good wil must come by strẽgth
of thylke iugement: for thy fyrst wyl ỳ taught
thyn herte to abyde, & halte it from the schange
with the reson is accorded. Trewly this ma-
ner of wyl thus shal abyde impossible it were
to turne yt thy herte be trewe, & yf euery man
dyligently the menynges of hys wyl cõsider,
he shall wel vnderstande that good wyl kept
with reason but in a falce herte neuer is voy
ded: for power & myght of kepyng thys good
wyl is thorow lyberte of arbytremẽt in hert,
but goodwyl to kepe may not fayle. Eke then
yf it fayle it wexeth it selfe that goodwyl in
kepyng is not there. And thus falle wyll that
putteth out the good, anone constraynyth the
herte to accorde in louynge of thy goodwyll,
& thys accordaunce betwene falce wyl & thyne
herte in falsyte ben lykened together. Yet a ly
tel wol I say the in good wyll thy goodwyl-
les to rayse & strength. Take hede to me (q
she) how thy wyttes thou shalt vnderstande.
Right as we han in your body bynethe mem-
bres and fyue sensyble wyttes, euerych apart
to hys owne boyng, what thinges as instru-
mentes we vsen, as your eyen apparte to hem-
ble sete to go, tonge to speke, eye to se, right
so ỳ soule hath in hym certayne sterynges &
strengthes whych he vseth as instrumentes to
his certayne doynges. Reason is the soule,
which he vseth thinges to know & to proue, &
wil, which he vseth to wilne: yet is neither
wyl ne reason al ỳ soule, but euerych of hem
is a thing by him self in ỳ soule. And right as
euerich hath thus singuler instrumentes by he
selfe, they han as well diuers aptes & diuers
maner vsynges, & thilke aptes mowe in wyll
ben cleped affections. Affectiõ is an instrumẽt
of wylling in his apetites. Wherfore mokel
folke sayne if a resonable creatures soule any
thing feruently wylneth, affectuously he wyl-
neth, & thus may wyl by terme of equiuocas
in thre wayes be vnderstãd: One is instrumẽt
of wylling, another is affectiõ of thys instru
ment: & the thrid is vse, ỳ setteth it a werke.
Instrumẽt of wylling is thilke strẽgth of the
soule, which ỳ cõstraineth to wylne, right as

reson is instrumēt of reasons, which ye vsen
when ye loken. Affection of thys instrument
is a thyng, by which ye be drawe desyrously e
any thyng to wyne in couetous maner, all
be it for the tyme out of your mynde: as yf it
come in your thought thylke thyng to remē-
bre, anone ye be wyllyng thilke to done or els
to haue. And thus is instrument wyl, & affec-
tion is wyl also to wyne tuyngs as I sayd:
as for to wyne helth, whē it is nothing ther-
on thinketh for anon as it cometh to memorie
it is in wyl, and so is affection to wyne slepe
whē it is out of mynde, but anone as it is re-
membred wyl wyneth slepe when his tyme
cometh of ỳ doynge. For affection of wyll ne-
uer accordeth to sykenesse ne alway to wake.
Right so in a true louers affectiō of willyng
instrument is to wyne truth in hys seruice,
& this affection alway abydeth, although he
be sleping or thenked, or els not theron thin-
kyng, but anon as it cometh to mynde, anone
he is redy all in that wil to abyde. Ellē of this
instrument forsoth is another thyng by hym
selfe, & that haue ye not but whe ye be doynge
in wyled thyng by affect or instrumēt of wil
purposed or desyred, & this maner of vsage in
my seruice wisely nedeth to be ruled fro way
ters ỳ enuy closed fro spekers ful of ydelnes
wordes, from proude folke & hautayne, that
lakes & innocentes both scornen & dyspysen.
Thus in doyng dareth the actes of willing
euerich from other, & yet ben they cleped wil,
& the name of wyl vtterly owen they to haue
as instrument of wyll as wyl, when ye turne
into purpose of any thynge to don, be it to syt
or to stande, or any suche thynge els. This in
strument maye ben had, although affecte and
vsage be lefte out of doynge, right as ye haue
syght and reason, and yet alway vse ye grea-
test wysedome in hem shall he be, and they in
god. Nowe then when all false folke be asha-
med, which wenen al bestialte & erthly thing
be swetter and better to the body, then heuely
is to the soule: thys is the grace & the frute ỳ
I longe haue desyred, it doth me good the sa-
uoure to smel. Christ nowe to the I crye of
mercy and of grace, and graunt of thy good-
nes to euery maner reder full vnderstādynge
in thys leude paynflet to haue, and let no man
wene other cause in thys werke, then is vere
ly the soth: For enuy is euer redy all innocē-
tes to shende, wherfore I wolde that good
speche enuye euermore hynder. But no man
wene thys werke be sufficiently maked, for
goddes werke passeth mans, no mās wyt to
perfit werke may by no way purchase thende:
How should I the so leude, ought wene of per
fectiō any ende to get? Neuer the latter grace
gloue, & laude I yeld & put vp worshypful re
uerences to ỳ forthfast god ethne, with vnto clo
sed which ỳ the heuy lāgour of my sykenesse
hath turned into marth of helth forcouere so:
right as I was forowed thorow the gloton
cloude of manyfolde sykely sorowe, so myrth
ayen comyng helth hath me gladed & greatly
coforted. I beseech & pray therfore, & I crye on
goddes gret pyte & on hys moked mercy, that
thys present scorges of my fleshe mow make
medecyn & lech craft of my inner mans helth,
so ỳ my passed trespas & tenes thorughe we
pyng of myne eyen ben wash. & I boyded fro
al maner dysese, & nomore to wepe hereafter,
I now be kept thorow goddes grace, so that
goddes hade which that mercyably me hath
scorged hereafter in good pyte fro thens mer
cyably me kepe & defede. In thys boke be ma
ny preuy thynges wympled & folde, whych
shul leude me the plytes vnwynde, wherfore
I pray to the holy goost he lene of hys owne
mētes mens wyttes to clere, and for goddes
loue no man wonder why or howe thys que
stion come to my mynde, for my great lustye
desyre was of thys lady to be enformed, my
leudnesse to amende. Certes I knowe not o-
ther mennes wyttes what I should aske or in
answere what I shulde saye, I am so leude
my selfe, that moked more lernynge yet me be
houeth. I haue made therfore as I could but
not sufficiently as I wolde, & as mater vaue
me sentence, for my dull wytte is hyndered
by stepmother of forgetynge, & wyth cloud of
vnconnynge, that stoppeth the lyghte of my
Margarite perle, wherfore it may not shyne
on me as it shulde. I desyre not onely a good
reder, but also I couyte & praye a good boke
amender, in correction of wordes and of sen-
tence: and onely thys mede I couete for my
trauayle, that euery vnseer and herer of thys
leude fantasye, deuoute orysons and prayers
to god the great iudge yelden, and prayen for
me, in that wyse that in hys dome my synnes
mowe ben released & forgeuen. He that pray-
eth for other for him selfe trauayleth. Also I
pray that euery man partyly mowe knowe

thorowe

thorowe what intencion of herte this tretyse haue I drawe. How was it ꝑ syghtfull Mãna in deserte to chyldꝛẽ of Israel was spiritu all meate bodely also it was, for mennes bodies it nourisheth. And yet neuer ꝑ later Christ it sygnifyed. Lyght so a iewell betokeneth a genume, a that is a stone vertuous, or els a perle. Margarite a womã betokeneth grace, lernyng or wysedo of god, or els holy church ꝑ breed thorow vertue is made holy flesshe, what is that our god sayth. It is the spirete that veueth lyfe the flesshe of nothynge it profyteth. Flesshe is fleshly vnderstandyng: Fleth wythout grace and loue nought is worth. The letter sleeth, ꝑ spirite veueth lyfe vnderstãdyng Charite is loue, and loue is charyte, god graunt vs all therin to be trended. And thus the Testament of Loue is ended.

¶ Thus endeth the Testament of Loue
And here after folowyth

The lamentacyon
of Mary Magdalene.

Longed in the wawe of
mortall bystresse
Alas for wo, to whom shall
I complayne
Or who shall deuoyde thys
great heuynesse
From me wofull Mary, wo-
full Magdalene
my lord is gon alas who wrought this treine
This sodeine chaunce persyth my hert so depe
That nothing can I do but wayle and wepe

My lorde is gone, ꝑ here in graue was layde
After hys great passion, and deth cruell
who hath hym thus agayne betrayde
Or what man here about can me tell
where he is become, the prynce of Israell
Jesus of Nazareth, my goostly sorour
My parfyte loue, and hope of all honour

what creature hath hym hence caryed
Or howe myght thys so sodeynly befall
I wolde I had here wyth hym taryed
And so shulde I haue had my purpose all
I bought oyntmentes full precious & royall
wherwyth I hoped his corps to anoynted
But he thus gone, my mynde is dyspoynted

whyle I therfore aduertyse and beholde
This pytous chaunce, here in my presence
Ful lytel maruayle though my herte be colde
Consydryng lo, my lordes absence
Alas that I so full of negligence
Shulde be founde, bycause I come so late
All men may saye I am infortunate

Cause of my sorowe, mẽ maye vnderstande
(Quia tulerunt dominum meum)
Another is, that I ne maye fonde
I wotnere, Vbi posuerunt eum
Thus I muste bewayle, Dolorem meum
wyth herty wepyng, I can no better deserue
Yf deth approche, my herte for to kerue

My herte oppresst wyth sodeyne auenture
By feruent angwyshe is bewrapped so
That longe thys lyfe I may not endure
Such is my payne, suche is my mortall wo
Neuertheles, to what partye shall I go
In hope to fynde myne owne turtyll true
My lyues loye, my soueraygne lorde Jesu

Syth all my loye, that I call hys presence
Is thus remoued nowe I am ful of mone
Alas the whyle, I made no prouidence
For thys myshap, wherfore I sygh & grone
Socour to fynd to what place might I gone
Fayne I wolde to some man my herte breke
I note to whom I may complayne or speke

Alone here I stande ful sory and ful sadde
which hoped to haue sene my lorde a kynge
Small cause haue I to be mery or gladde
Remembryng thys bytterfull departynge
In thys worlde is no creature lyuynge
That was to me so good and gracious
Hys loue also then golde more precious

Ful sore I sygh, wythout comforte agayne
There is no cure to my saluation
Hys brennyng loue, my herte so doth cõstraine
Alas here is a wofull permutation
wherof I fynde no loye nor consolacion
Therfore my payne all onely to confesse
wyth dethe I feare woll ende my heuynesse

Thys wo and angwyshe is intollerable

yf I byde here, lyfe can I not fuſtayne
yf I go hence my paynes be vncurable
wher hi to fynde, I knowe no place certayne
And thus I not of theſe thynges twayne
whych I maye take, & whych I may refuſe
My hert is wounded heron to thynke or muſe

Whyle I ſhall ſtande in thys mournyng
In hope yf any byſyon wol appere
That of my loue might tel ſome good tidyng
whych vnto ioy, myght change my wepynge
I truſt in his grace & hys mercy dere (chere
But at the leeſt, though I therwyth me dyll
I ſhal not ſpare to wayle and wepe my fyll

And yf that I dye in ſuche auenture
I can nomore, but welcome as my chaunce
My bones ſhall reſt here in thys ſepulture
My lyfe, my dethe, is at hys ordinaunce
It ſhalbe tolde in euerlaſtyng remembraunce
Thus to departe, is to me no ſhame
And alſo therof I am nothynge to blame

Hope agaynſt me hath her courſe ytake
There is nomore but thus ſhall I dye
I ſe tyght wel my lorde hath me forſake
But to my ſoeyte cauſe knowe I none why
Though he be farre hence, and nothyng nye
Yet my wofull herte after hym doth ſche
And cauſeth teeres to ren downe by my cheke

Thynkyng alas, I haue loſt hys preſence
whych in this worlde was al my fulfillaunce
I crye and cal wyth hertyy dyligence
But there is no wyght gyueth attendaunce
Ne to certifye of myne enquyraunce
wherfore I wyll to al thys worlde bewraye
Howe that my lorde is flayne & borne awaye

Though I mourne it is no great wonder
Syth he is al my loye in ſpecial
And nowe I thynke we be ſo farre aſonder
That hym to ſe I feare neuer I ſhall
It helpeth no more after hym to call
Ne after hym to enquyre in any coſte
Alas howe is he thus gone and loſte

The iewes I thynke full of myſery
Sette in malyce, by theyr bely cure
wyth force and myght of gyleſull trechery
Hath entermyned my lordes ſepulture
And borne awaye that precious fygure
Leuynge of it nothynge, yf they haue done ſo
Harted I am, alas what ſhall I do

wyth theyr vengraunce inſaciable
Nowe haue they hym entreated ſo
That to reporte it is to lamentable
They bete hys body from toppe to the toe
Neuer man was borne that felte ſuche wo
They wounded hym alas wyth al greuaunce
The blode downe reyled in moſt habudaunce

The blody rowes ſtremed downe ouer all
They hym aſſayled ſo malycyouſly
wyth theyr ſcourges and ſtrokes breſyall
They ſpared not, but ſmote vncellaunely
To ſatisfye theyr malyce they were full buſy
They ſpit in his face, they ſmote here & there
He groned ful ſore, and ſwette many a tere

They crowned him wyth thornes ſharpe & kene
The baynes rent, the blode ran downe apace
wyth bloode ouercome were both hys eyen
And downe wyth ſtrokes was his bleſſed face
They hym entreated, as men without grace
They kneled to hym, & made many a ſcorne
Like he houndes they bete hym al to tome

Upon a myghty croſſe in length and brede
They hym turmented the wed theyr curſydneſſe
they nayled hym wythout pyte or drede
hys precious bloode braſt out in largeneſſe
They ſtrayned him alongt, as me mercyeſſe
The bery ioynters all to myne apparence
Vyued aſonder, for theyr great vyolence

All thys I beholdyng wyth myne eyen twayne
Stode there beſyde, wyth rufull attendaunce
And euer me thought, he beyng in that payne
Loked on me, wyth deedly countenaunce
As he had layd in hys ſpecial remembraunce
Fare well Magdalen, departe muſt I nedes
My herte is, Cáquá certa inquiſitus (bens

whych rufull ſyght when I gan beholde
Out of my wytte I almoſt dyſtraught
Tare my heere, my handes wrange & folde
And of ſ ſight my herte brake ſuch a draught
That many a fal ſwounyng there I caught
I bruſed my body, fallyng on the grounde
wherof I fele many a greuous wounde

The theſe wretches, full of al frowardneſſe

Gaue

Gaue him to dzynke eyſell tempzed with gal
Alas, that poyſon full of bytternelle
My loues chere cauſed than to appall
And yet therof might he nat dzinke at all
But ſpake theſe wozdes, as him thought beſt
Father of heuen, Conſummatum eſt

Than kneled I downe, in paynes outrage
Clipping ꝑ croſſe within myn armes twayn
His bloode diſtylled downe on my vyſage
My clothes eke the dzoppes dyd diſtayne
To haue dyed for him I wolde full fayne
But what ſhulde it auayle yf I dyd ſo
Sythe he is, Suſpenſus in patibulo

Thus my lozde full dere was all diſgyſed
With bloode, payne, and woundes many one
His veynes blaſt, hys ioyntes all to ryued
Partyng aſonder the fleſhe fro the bone
But I ſawe he hynge nat there alone
For Cum iniquis deputatus eſt
Nat lyke a man, but lyke a leprous beſt

A lyrde knyght men called Longias
With a ſpeare approched vnto my ſouerayne
Launſyng his ſyde full pytouſly alas
That his precious herte he claue in twayne
The purple bloode eke fro the hertes bayne
Down rayled right fast in moſte ruful wyſe
With cbriſtal water brought out of parabyſe

When I beheld thys wofull paſſyon
I wote nat howe by ſodayne auenture
My herte was peerſed with very compaſſyó
That in me remayned no lyſe of nature
Strokes of dethe I felte wythout meaſure
My bertes wolde I caught, vh wo oppreſt
And brought to poynt as my hert ſhuld brſt

The woũde hert, and blood of my darlyng
Shall neuer ſtyde fro my remembzall
The bytter paynes alſo of tourmentyng
Within my ſoule be grauen principall
The ſpeare alas that was ſo ſharpe withall
So thrulled my herte, as to my ſeeyng
That body and ſoule were at departyng

As ſone as I might I releued vp agayne
My dzethe I coude nat very well reſtore
Feelyng my ſelfe drowned in ſo great payne
Both body & ſoul me thought were al to tozе
Vyolent falles greued me right ſoze
I wepte, I bledde, & with my ſelfe I fared
As one that for his lyfe nothyng had cared

Lokyng vp to that rufull Roode
Sawe firſt the vyſage pale of that fygure
But ſo pytous a ſyght ſpotted with bloode
Sawe neuer yet no lyuyng creature
So it exceded the bounder of meaſure
That mánes mynd, with al his wyttes fyue
Is nothynge able, that payne for to dilcryue

Than gan I there myne armes to vnbrace
Vp lyftyng my handes full mournyngly
I ſyghed and ſoze ſobbed in that place
Both heuen & erth might haue herde me cryе
Wepyng, and ſayd alas inceſſauntly
Ah my ſwete herte, my goſtly paramour
Alas I may nat thy body ſocour

O bleſſed lozde, howe feerſe and howe cruell
Theſe curſed wightes nowe hath the ſtayne
Berayng alas thy body euerydell
Woude within woud, ful bytter is thy payne
Nowe wolde that I might to the attayne
To nayle my body full vnto thy tree
So that of this payne thou might go free

I can nat repozte ne make no reherſayle
Of my demenyng wyth the cyrcumſtaunces
But wel I wote the ſpeare with euery nayle
Thrilled my ſoule by inwarde reſentaunce
Whiche neuer ſhall out of my remembzaunce
Duryng my lyfe it wyll cauſe me to wayle
As ofte as I remembre that batayle

Ah ye tewes, woꝛſe than dogges rabyate
What moued you thus cruelly him to ſlay
He neuer diſpleaſed you nor cauſed debate
Your loue and true hertes he conuerted are
He preched, he teched, he ſhewed ꝑ right way
Wherfore ye lyke tyrantes wode & wayward
Now haue him thus ſlayne for his reward

Ye ought to haue remembzed one thing ſpecial
His honour, his grace, and his magnyfycence
He was your prince borne, and lozde euer all
Howe be it ye toke him in ſmall reuerence
He was full meke in ſuffryng your offence
Neuertheles ye deuoured him vh one aſſent
As hungry wolues dothe the lambe innocent

Where was your pyte, o people mercyleſſe

Remyng your self with falsheed and treason
On my lord ye haue shewed your woodnesse
Lyke no men, but beestes without reason
Your malyce he suffred all for the season
Your payne wol come, thynke it nat to slacke
Man without mercy of mercy shall lacke

O ye traytours & mayntayners of madnesse
Unto your folly I ascribe all my payne
Ye haue me depriued of ioye and gladnesse
So dealyng with my lorde and souerayne
Nothyng shulde I nede thus to complayne
If he had lyued in peace and tranquillyte
Whom ye haue slayne through your iniquite

Farwel your noblenesse & sotyme dyd rayne
Farewel your worthyp, glorie and fame
Here after to lyue in hate and disdayne
Warnayle ye nat, for your trespas & blame
Unto shame is turned all your good name
Upon you nowe woll wonder euery nacion
As people of most lyle reputacion

These wycked wretches these houdes of hel
As I haue tolde playne here in this sentence
Were nat content my dere loue thus to quell
But yet they muste embelyle his presence
As I perceyue by couert violence
They haue him conueyed to my displesure
For here is lafte but naked sepulture

Wherfore of truthe and rightfull iugement
That their malyce agayne may be requyted
After my verdyte and auysement
Of false murder they shall be endyted
Of theste also, whiche shal nat be respyted
And in all haste they shal be hanged & drawe
I woll my selfe plede this cause in the lawe

Alas yf I with true attendaunce
Had styll abydden with my lordes corse
And kept it styll wyth trewe perceuerannce
Than had nat befall thys wofull deuorse
But as for my payne welcome and no force
This shall be my songe where so euer I go
Departyng is grounde of all my wo

I se right wel nowe in my paynes smerte
There is no wounde of so grieuous dolour
As is the wounde of my carefull herte
Sythe I haue loste thus my paramour
All swetnesse is tourned in to sour
Wythe to my herte nothyng may conuey
But he that beareth therof bothe locke & key

The ioye excellent of blyssed paradyse
Waye me alas in no wyse recomforte
Songe of angell nothyng may me suffyse
As in myne herte nowe to make disporte
All I refuse, but that I might resorte
Unto my loue, the well of goodlyheed
For whose longyng I trowe I shalbe deed

Of paynfull labour and tourment corporall
I make therof none exception
Paynes of hell I woll passe ouer all
My loue to fynde in myne affection
So great to him is my dilectation
A thousande tymes martred wolde I be
His blyssed body ones yf I might se

About this worlde so large in all compace
I shall nat spare to renne my lyfe durying
My fete also shall nat rest in one place
Tyll of my loue I may here some tidyng
For whose absence my hades now I wryng
To thinke on him, ceasse shal neuer my mynd
O gentyll Jesu where shall I the fynde

Jerusalem wol I serche place fro place
Syon, the dale of Josophath also
And yf I fynde hym nat in all this space
By mount Olyuet to Bethany woll I go
These wayes woll I wander and many mo
Nazareth, Bethleem, Mountana Jude
No trauayle shall me payne hym for to se

His blyssed face yf I might se and fynde
Serche I wolde euery coste and countrey
The fardest parte of Egipt or hote Inde
Shulde be to me but a lytell iourney
Howe is he thus gone or taken away
Yf I knewe the full trouthe and certente
Yet from this care released might I be

In to wyldernesse I thynke best to go
Sith I can no more tidynges of him here
There may I my lyfe lede to and fro
There may I dwell, and to no man appere
To towne ne byllage woll I come nere
Alone in woodes, in rockes, & in caues depe
I may at myne own wil both wayle & wepe

Myne eyen twayne withouten daryaunce
Shall

Shall neuer ceasse, I promyse faithfully
There to wepe wyth great abundaunce
Bytter teares rennyng incessauntly
The whiche teares medled ful pitously
wyth the very blode euer shall renne also
Expressyng in myne herte the grieuous wo

worldly fode and sustenaunce I desyre none
Suche lyuyng as I fynde, such woll I take
Rotes that growen on the craggy stone
Shall me suffyse wyth water of the lake
Thus thus may I say for my lordes sake
(Fuerunt mihi lachryme mee)
(In deserto panes die ac nocte)

My body to clothe it maketh no force
A mournyng mantell shalbe sufficient
The grieuous woundes of hys pytous corse
Shalbe to me a full royall garnement
Be departed thus, I am best content
His crosse with nayles and scourges withal
Shalbe my thought and payne special

Thus woll I lyue, as I haue here tolde
yf I may any longe tyme endure
But I feare dethe is ouer me so bolde
That of my purpose I can nat be sure
My paynes encrease wythout measure
For of longe lyfe who can lay any reason
All thyng is mortall, and hath but a season

I syghe full sore, and it is ferre fet
Myne herte I fele nowe bledeth inwardly
The blody teares I may in no wyse let
Sythe of my payne I fynde no remedy
I thanke god of all yf I nowe dye
His wyl performed I holde me content
My soule let hym take that hath it me lent

For longer to endure it is intollerable
My wofull herte is enflamed so huge
That no sorowe to myne is comparable
Sythe of my mynde I fynde no refuge
Yet I hym requyre as ryghtfull iuge
To denoyde fro me the inwarde sorowe
Lest I lyue nat to the herte morowe

wythin myne herte is impressed full sore
His royall forme, his shappe, his semelynesse
His porte, his chere, his goodnesse euermore
His noble persone wyth all gentylnesse
He is the welle of all parfytnesse
The very redemer of all mankynde
Hym loue I best, with hert, soule and mynde

In his absence my paynes full bytter be
Rightwell I maye it fele nowe inwardly
No wonder is though they hurte or slee me
They cause me to crye so rewefully
Myne herte oppressed is so wonderfully
Onely for hym, whiche is so bright of blee
Alas I trowe I shall hym neuer se

My ioye is traslate full farre in exile
My myrthe is chaunged in to paynes colde
My lyfe I thynke endureth but a whyle
Anguyshe and payne is that I beholde
wherfore my handes thus I wrynge & folde
In to this graue I loke, I call, I pray
Dethe remayneth, and lyfe is borne away

Nowe must I walke & wander here & there
God wote to what partes I shall me dresse
wyth quakyng herte, wepyng many a tere
To seke out my loue and all my swetnesse
I wolde he wyst what mortall heuynesse
About myne herte renneth more and more
Than wolde he nat kepe pyte long in store

wythout hym I may nat long endure
His loue so sore worketh wythin my brest
And euer I wepe before thys sepulture
Sighyng ful sore, as myne hert shulde brest
Durying my lyfe I shall optayne no rest.
But mourne & wepe, where that euer I go
Makyng complaynt of all my mortall wo

Fast I crye, but there is no audyence
My comming hyder was hym for to please
My soule oppressed is here with his absence
Alas he lyst nat to sette myne hert in ease
wherfore to payne my selfe withall disease
I shall nat spare tyll he take me to grace
Or elys shall I serue here in this place

Ones yf I myght wyth him speke
It were all my ioye, with parfyte plesaunce
So that I myght to him myne hert breke
I shulde anone denoyde all my greuaunce
For he is the welle of very recreaunce
But nowe alas, I can nothyng do so
For in stede of ioye naught haue I but wo

His noble corse within myne hertes rote

Depe

Depe is graued, whiche shall neuer slake
Nowe is he gone, to what place I ne wote
I mourne, I wepe, and all is for his sake
Wythe he is passe, here a bowe I make
Wyth hertely promyse, & therto I me bynde
Neuer to cease tyll I may hym fynde

Vnto hys mother I thynke for to go
Of her haply some comforte may I take
But one thyng yet me feareth and no mo
Yf I any mention of hym make
Of my wordes she wold tremble and quake
And who coude her blame, she hang but one
The son borne away, the mother woll mone

Sorowes many hath she suffred trewly
Syth that she fyrst conceyued hym and bare
And seuyn thynges there be most specially
That drowneth her hert in sorowe and care
Yet to in no wyse may they compare
Wyth this one nowe, the which yf she knewe
She wolde her paynes eurichone renewe

Great was her sorowe by mennes sayeng
When in the temple Symeon Iustus
Spekeyng to her sorfe wordes yea, darkeng
(Cuius animam pertransibit gladius)
Also whan her sone that tyrant furious
Herode pursued in euery place
Yet his hyre went neyther mercy ne grace

She mourned whan she knewe hym gone
Ful long she sought or she him founde aryse
Whan he went to dethe hys croffe him vpon
It was to her syght a ferefull payne
Whan he hong thefon bet wene theues twayn
And the speare vnto his hert thrust syght
She swouned, & to the grounde there pight

Whan deed and blody in her lappe lay
Hys blessed body, both handes & fete all tore
She cryed out and sayd, nowe welaway
Thus arayde was neuer man before
Whan halte was made his body to be bore
Vnto hys sepulture here to remayne
Vnnethes for wo she coude her sustayne

These sorowes seuyn, lyke swerds euery one
Hys mothers hert wounded fro syde to syde
But yf she knewe her sonne thus gone
Out of this worlde she shuld with deth tryde
For care she coude no lenger here abyde
Hauyng no more ioye nor consolacioun
Than I here standyng in this stacioun

Wherfore her to se I dare nat presume
Fro her presence I woll my selfe refrayne
Yet had I leuer to dye and consume
Thā his mother shuld haue any more payne
Neuertheleffe her sonne wold I se ful fayne
His presence was very ioye and swetnesse
Hys absence is but sorowe and heuynesse

There is no more, syth I may him nat mete
Whom I desyre aboue all other thyng
Nedes I must take the soure with the swete
For of hys noble corse I here no tydyng
Full ofte I crye, and my handes wryng
Wyne herte alas, relenteth all in payne
Whyche wol braft bothe sene we and bayne

Alas howe vnhappy was this wofull houre
Wherin is thus mispended my seruyce
For myne entente and the my trewe labour
To none effecte may come in any wyse
Alas I thynke yf he do me dye pase
And lyst nat to take my symple obseruaunce
There is no more, but deth is my fyrmaunce

I haue him called, Sed non respondit mihi
Wherfore my myrth is tourned to mourning
O dere lorde, Quid mali feci tibi
That me to comforte I fynde non erthly thyng
Alas, haue compassyon of my crying
Ne tre me, Auertem tuam ab oculis
There is no more, but Comfaunce me bis

Within myne hert is grounded thy figure
That all this worldes horrible tourment
May nat it alay ye it is so without measure
It is so brennyng, it is so feruent
Remembre lorde I haue ben dilygent
Euer the to please onely and no mo
Wyne herte is with the where soeuer I go

Therfore my dere darling, Trahe me post te
And let me nat stande thus desolate
(Quia non est qui consoletur me)
Wyne herte for the is desconsolate
My paynes also nothyng me moderate
Nowe yf it lyke the to speke with me a lyue
Come in hast, for my hert a sonder wyll ryue

To the I profer to my poore seruyce

The so

The for to please after myne owne entent
I offre here as in deuout sacrifyce
My bore replete with precious ointment
Myne eyen twayne, weping fulfyment
Myne herte with angwyshe fulfylled is alas
My soule the redy for loue about to pas

Naught els haue I the to please or pay
For if myne hert were gold or precious stone
It shulde be thyne without any delay
wyth hertely chere yͤ shuldest haue it anone
why suffrest thou me than to stande alone
Thou hast I trowe my weping in disdayne
Or els thou knowest nat what is my payne

yf thou withdrawe thy noble dalyaunce
For ought that euer I displeased the
Thou knowest ryght wel it is but ignoraūce
And of no knowlege for certaynte
If I haue offended lorde forgyue it me
Gladde I am for to make full repentaunce
Of all thyng that hath ben to thy greuaunce

Myne herte alas swelleth within my brest
So sore oppiest with anguishe & with payne
That all to peces fayne it wold brest
But yt I se thy blessed corse agayne
For lyfe ne dethe I can nat me restrayne
If thou make delay thou mayst be sure
Myne herte wol leape in to this sepulture

Alas my lord why farest thou thus with me
My tribulation yet haue in mynde
where is thy mercy where is thy pyte
which euer I trusted in the to fynde
Myne thou were to me both good & kynde
Lette it please the my prayer to accept
which with teares I haue here bewept

On me thou oughtest to haue ben routh
Sith for the is all this mourning
For syth I to the aplyghted fyrst my trouth
I neuer varyed with discordyng
That knowest thou best myne owne darling
why constraynest thou me thus to wayle
My wo forsoth can the nothyng auayle

I haue endured without variaunce
Right as thou knowest thy louer must nedew
with hert & thought aye, at thyne ordynaūce
Lyke to the saphire alwaye in one hewe
I neuer chaunged the for no newe
why withdrawest thou my presence
Sith all my thought is for thyne absence

wyth herte entier, swete lorde I crye to the
Enclyne thyne eares to my peticioun
And come, Eleuciter exaudi me
Remembre myne hertes disposition
It maye nat endure in this condicioun
Therfore out of these paynes, Libera me
And where thou arte, Pone me iuxta te

Lette me beholde, O Jesu thy blyssed face
Thy faire glorious angelyke visage
Bowe thyne eares to my complaynt, alas
For to conuey me out of this rage
Alas my lorde, take fro me this dōmage
And to my desyre for mercy condiscende
For non but thou, may my greuaūce amende

Nowe yet good lorde, I the beseche and pray
As thou rayed my brother Lazarous
Frome dethe to lyfe the fourth day
Come ayen in body and soule precious
As great a thyng mayst thou the me vnto vs
Of thy selfe by power of thy goodhed
As thou dyd of hym, lyenge in graue dede

Myne hert is wounded with thy charite
It brenneth, it flameth incessantly
Come my dere lorde, Ad adiuuandum me
Nowe be nat longe my payne to multiply
Fyll in the meane tyme I departe and dye
In thy grace I put bothe hope and confidence
To do as it pleaseth thy hye magnyficence

Floodes of dethe, and tribulacyon
In to my soule I fele entred full depe
Alas that here is no consolacioun
Euer I wayle, euer I mourne and wepe
And sorow hath wounded myne hert full depe
O dere loue no marueyle though I dye
(Sagitte tue infixe sunt mihi)

Wandryng in this place, as in wylderneſſe
No comforte haue I ne yet assuraunce
Desolate of ioye, replete with fayntneſſe
No anſwere receyuyng of myne enquraūce
Myne herte also graued wyth displesaunce
Wherfore I may saye, O deus deus
(Non est dolor sicut dolor meus)

Myne hert expresseth, Quod dilexi multum
I may

I may nat endure though I wolde fayne
For now, Solum superest sepulchrum
I knowe it right well by my huge payne
Thus for loue I may nat lyfe sustayne
But o god, I muse what ayleth the
(Quod sic repente precipitas me)

Alas, I se it wyll none otherwyse be
Nowe must I take my leaue for euermore
This bytter payne hath almost dismyted me
My loues corse I can in no wyse restore
Alas to this wo that euer I was bore
Here at his tombe now muste I dye a starue
Bothe is aboute my herte for to carue

My testament I wolde begyn to make
To god the father, my soule I commende
To Jesu my loue, that dyed for my sake
My herte and all, bothe I gyue and sende
In whose loue my lyfe maketh an ende
My body also to this monument
I here bequeth, bothe bore and ointment

Of all my wylles, lo nowe I make the last
Right in this place within this sepulture
I wol be buryed whan I am deed and past
And vpon my graue I woll haue this scripture
Here within resteth a goostly creature
Christes trewe louer, Mary Magdalayne
Whose hert for loue, brake in peces twayne

Ye vertuous women, tender of nature
Full of pyte and of compassyoun
Resorte I pray you, vnto my sepulture
To synge my dirige with great deuocioun
Shewe your charyte in this condicioun
Sying with pyte, and let your hertes wepe
Remembring I am deed and layde to slepe

Than whan ye begyn to parte me fro
And ended haue your mourning obseruaunce
Remembre where so euer that ye go
Alway to serche and make due enquerraunce
After my loue, myne hertes sustenaunce
In euery towne and in euery village
Yf ye maye here of this noble ymage

And yf it happe by any grace at laste
That ye my trewe loue fynde in any coste
Say that his Magdalene is deed and past
For his pure loue hath yelded vp the goste
Say that of all thyng I loued him moste
And that I might nat this bethe eschewe
My paynes sore dyde euer renewe

And in token of loue perpetuall
Whan I am buryed in this place present
Take out myne hert, the very rote and all
And close it within this bore of ointment
To my dere loue make therof a present
Kneelyng downe with wordes lamentable
Do your message, spoke fayre and treatable

Say that to him my selfe I commende
A thousande tymes with herte so free
This poore token say to hym I sende
Pleaseth his goodnesse to take it in gree
It is hys owne of ryght, it is hys fee
Whyche he asked, whan he layd longe before
Gyue me thy herte, and I desyre no more

A due my lorde, my loue so fayre of face
A due my turtel doue so freshe of hue
A due my myrthe, a due al my solace
A due alas, my sauyour lorde Jesu
A due the gentylest that euer I knewe
A due my most excellent paramour
Fayrer than rose, swetter than Lylly flour

A due my hope of all pleasure eternall
My lyfe, my welth, and my prosperite
Myne herte of golde, my perle oryentall
Myne adamant of parfyte charite
My chefe refuge and my fryende
My comforte, and all my recreacioun
Farewell my perpetuall saluacioun

Farewell myne Emperour celestyall
Most beautyful prince of al mankynde
A due my lorde, of herte most lyberall
Farewell my swetest, bothe soule and mynde
So louyng a spouse shall I neuer fynde
A due my souerayne, and very gentylman
Farewell dere herte, as hertely as I can

Thy wordes eloquent flowing in swetnesse
Shall no more alas, my mynde reconforte
Wherfore my lyfe must ende in bytternesse
For in this worlde shall I neuer resorte
To the, whiche was myne heuenly disporte
I se alas it wolle none other be
Nowe farewell the grounde of all dignite

A due the fayrest that euer was bore

Alas

Alas I may not se your blessed face
Nowe welaway that I shal se no more
Thy blessed vysage, so replete wyth grace
wherin is printed my parfyte solace
I due myne hertes roote and al for euer
Nowe farewel, I must from the diseruer

My soule for anguysh is nowe full thursty
I faynt eyght sore for heuynesse
My lorde, my spouse: Cur me dereliquistie
Syth I for the suffre al thys distresse
what causeth the to seme thus mercyelesse
Sith it the pleaseth of me to make an ende
(In manus tuas my spirite I cõmende.

C Finis.

The Remedy of Loue.

Seyng the manyfolde inconuenience
Fallynge by vnbridled prosperite
which is not tempred with moral prudence
Nothyng more welthy thã youthes freite
Moued I am both of eyght and equyte
To youthes wele, somwhat to write
wherby he may hym selfe safecondyte

Fyrst I note, as thyng moost noyous
Vnto youth a greuous malady
Amonge vs called loue encombrous
Clerynge yonge people steangrly
Ofte by force causeth hem to dye
Age is the tormented by loue
Byrieth the gyrdle, and not aboue

wherfore thys werke, which is eyght labo-
For age me nede not in hande to take (rous
To youth me oweth to be obsequious
Nowe I begyn thus to worke for hys sake
whych may the feruence of loue a slake
To the louer, as a mitigatyue
To hym that is none a preseruatyue

That myghty lorde whych me gouerneth
Youth I meane, measure yf I pace
In euery mater whiche hym concerneth
Fyrst as is behoueful, I woll aske grace
And forthwythal in thys same place
Er I begyn, I wol knele and saye
These fewe wordes, and hym of helpe pray

Flouryng youth, whych hast auauntage
In strength of body in lust and beaute
Also a precellyng haste aboue age
In many a singuler commodite
Nowe be it one thyng be hath beyonde the
To thy moost profyte and greatest auayle
which thiud ỳ cõdut, I meane sad counsayle

And yet good lorde, of a presumption
I wyl deprane thy myght and dette
I lyue but vnder thy protection
I am thy subiecte, I weare thy lyuerie
For thou arte grounde of my prosperite
And freshest floure of al my garlonde
My singuler ayde, as I wel vnderstonde

But as he that oweth hys lorde belle seruice
And entyre fayth, his honour to supporte
Eyght so I speke, and in none other wise
I knowlege my selfe one of the lesse sorte
Of thy seruauntes, to our elders comforte
To owe sadde counsayle to the yf thou wilt
Che and thy power, who may than resyst

Fye on age vnder wordes fewe
And his erroneous opinyon
what speke I of him, why the sayth moost vn
Al youth to be of yl disposition (true
Dampneth vs al wythout exception
And for a colerable auauntage
he sayth in him resteth counsayle sage

Wel may sadde counsayle in hym rest
But yet hys dedes bene ferre therfro
He may say wyth our parysshe preest
Do as I say, and not as I do
For I my selfe knowe one or two
wel stryken in age, for neyghbourhedde
wol to theyr neyghbours wyues bedde

He wyl in presence of the yonge man
Her clyppe and kysse, yea and bowne laye
To bleare hys eye, thus he sayth than
O suffre yet olde Noyel to playe

Nowe haue I done that I can or may
Thus he saeth, her husbonde to queme
That he nor no man shulde not misdeme

In worde nor dede, nedeth hym not be coye
It is impossible that he do amysse
If the yonge mā speke, anone he sayeth boye
To rebuke age, besemeth the not ywys
Thus hys olde face aye hys warant is
All is in hym, sleyght and subtylte
And ferre from reason I tel the

And shortly age is not aboue me
Age is impotent, and of no resistence
Age vnwieldy may not fyght nor flye
what were age wythout my defence
Bad counsayle sayst gyueth hym assistence
Reason is frechest where that I ame
wherfore in thy sayeng thou art to blame

Syth reason to me is rather acompanyed
Than vnto age, whyche is the opinyon
Of euery wyse man not to be denyed
And syth bad counsayle procedeth of reason
Bad counsaile in me hath his chefe mansion
Thys is no naye, but what is the ende
Of thys thy suasion what doest entende

Age to compare vnto thyne excellence
I wyl presume hym so to dignifye
Yet be not egal, howe be it experience
Vnto auaunctageth for the most certaynly
Vnto teacheth what thyng to him is cōtrary
And oft to forfet it, and warely eschewe
which thou neuer allaydest yet nor knewe

Experience maketh a man moost certayne
Of any thyng erthly, and of necessite
Bad counsayle requyreth certaynte playne
So ferre to moue this whereto nede we
But to my purpose, as thou cōmaundest me
Shortly myne entente is this, & none other
Vnder thy licence to counsayle my brother

Howe shuldest gyue any counsayle so yonge
Lacking experience vnto thyne owne speche
I repute me, I wote wel as for thy tonge
wyl serue the right wel, but than for to teche
I dout me lest that thy wytte wol not reche
Youth & experience thou sayest be not cōuert
Howe shuldest than teache wel vnexpert

Scripture wytnesseth that god wyl oft shyt
Fro the hye witted man, & shewe it to ꝑ childe
To hym I meane that of hys owne wyt
Presumeth not, but is debonayre & mylde
By counsayle I entende vertue for to byde
which of myne elders part haue I borowed
& part of experience, which I haue sorowed

wel than, yf it be as thou lettest fare
Shewe forth thy doctrine be not agast
I wol the supporte, lose thou not spare
Maugre age, though he frete or gnast
To all he age counsayle herin were but wast
Boldely begyn, go forth to thy processe
Feare not syth thou arte of such sureryte

Graunt mercy lorde syth it the doth lyke
To licence me, nowe I wol and dare boldly
Assayle my purpose, wt scriptures autentike
My werke wol I groūd, vnderset, & fortify
Aspire my begynnyng, O thou woode fury
Alecto wyth thy susters, and in especial
To the mother of tresoure Iuno I call

Explicit prologus.



This werke who so shall se or rede
Of any incongruite do
me not impeche
Ordinarily behoueth me
first to procede
In deduction thereof, in
maner as the leche
His pacientes sycknes oweth first for to seche
The which knowē, medicyne he shulde aply
And shortly as he can than shape a remedy

Right so by cōsayle, wyllyng the to exhort
O yonge mā prosperous which doth aboude
In thy floures of insl belongeth on the sorte
Be first to cōsider what is roote & grounde
Of thy infyrmyte, whyche is playnly founde
woman farced wyth fraude and dyscevte
To thy confusyon moost allectyue bayte

Flye the myswoman, lest she the dyscevue
thus sayth Salomō, which fraut was fully
the fulsherd of womē in his dates to cōceyue
The lippes of a strūpet ben swetter thā hony
Yet throte be saith supplied wt oyle of flattery
Howe be it the ende and effecte of al
Bytterer is than any wormwode or gall

Fly

Flye the mis woman, louyng thy lyfe
ware the straungers blande eloquence
Straunge I cal her that is not thy wyfe
Of her beautie haue me no concupiscence
Her countenaunce, pretendyng benevolence
Beware her signes and eye so amiable
Holde it for ferme, they bene discevuable

Lo an ensample what women be
In their signes and countenaunce shortly
I wol shewe the howe louers thre
Loued one woman right entierly
Eche of them knewe others malady
wherfore was al their dayly labour
who coude approche next in her fauour

At sondrye seasons, as fortune requyreth
Severally they came to se her welfare
But ones it happened loue them so fyreth
To se their lady they al wolde not spare
Of others comyng none of them were ware
Til al they mette, where as they in place
Of her lady sawe the desyred face

To supper sette, ful smally they ete
Full sobre and demure in countenaunce
For there tarved none of hem for any mete
But on his lady to gyue attendaunce
And in secrete wyse some signifyaunce
Of loue to haue, whych parceyuyng she
Secretly executed thus her propertie

In due season as she alway espyed
Every thyng to execute conuenyently
Her owne louer fyrst frendly she eyed
The seconde she offred the cuppe curtesly
The thyrde she gaue token secretly
Undemeth the borde she trade on his fote
Through his entrayles tickled the herte rote

By your leue, myght I here aske a question
Of you my maystres that sewe louers trace
To you lykely belongeth the solucion
whych of these thre stode nowe in grace
Clerely to answere ye wold aske long space
The mater is doutful and opinable
To acertayne you I woll my selfe enable

Of the forsayd thre my selfe was one
No man can answere it better than I
Verely of vs beloued was there none
But wattes packe we bare al by and by
whych at the last I my selfe gan aspye
And time as me thought, thā I left the daūce
O thoughtful hert, great is thy grevaunce

Hence fro me hence, that me for to endyte
Halpe aye here afore, O ye muses nyne
whyló ye were wont to be mine ayde & light
My penne to directe, my brayne to illumyne
No lenger alas may I sewe your doctrine
The freshe lusty meters, ꝑ I wont to make
Haue bene here afore, I vtterly forsake

Come hether thou Hermes, and ye furies al
which for ben vnder vs, nigh the nether pole
where Pluto reigneth, O kyng infernal
Send out thine arpies, send anguysh & dole
Misery and wo, leaue ye me not sole
Of right be present must paine & eke turmēt
The pale deth beseemeth not to be absent

To me nowe I cal al thys lothsome sorte
my paines encrese, my sorowes to augmet
For worthy I am to be bare of al comforte
Thus syth I haue consumed and mispent
Not only my dayes, but my fivefolde talent
ꝑ my lorde comitted me, I can not recōpence
I may not to dercly abye my negligence.

By the path of penaunce yet wol I reuert
To the welle of grace, mercy there to fetche
Dispeyll not god the meke contrite hert
Of the cocke crow, alas ꝑ I wolde not retch
And yet it is not late in the seconde wetche
Mercy shal I purchace by incessaunt crieng
The mercyes of our lorde euer shal I sying

But well mayst thou wayle wicked woman
that thou shuldest disceyue thus any innocet
And in recompence of my synne, so as I can
To al mē wol I make & leue this monumēt
In shewing part of thy falsheed is myn entēt
For al were to much, I can not wel I wote
The cause sheweth playnly be ꝑ thus wrote

If al the erth were parchement scribable
Spedy for the hande, and al maner wode
were hewed & proporcioned to pennes able
Al water ynke, in damme or in flode
Every man being a perfyte scribe & good
The cursednesse yet and disceyte of women
Coude not be shewed by the meane of penne

I flye al odyous resemblaunces
The dyuels blonde cal women I myght
wherby man is encensed to mischaunce
Or a stynkyng rose that fayre is in syght
Or deedly empoyson lyke the suger whyte
whych by hys swetnesse causeth man to tast
and sodaynly sleeth & brigeth him to his last

It is not my maner to vse such langage
But thys my doctrine, as I may lawfully
I wol holy grounde wyth auctoritie sage
wyllynge both wysdom and vertue edify
wyne and women in to apostasy
Cause wyse men to fall, what is that to say
Of wysdome cause them to forget the way

wherfore the wyse man dothe the aduyse
In whose wordes can be founde no fealyng
wyth the straunger to sytte in no wyse
which is not thy wyfe, fal not in clyppyng
wyth her, but beware eke of her kyssyng
kepe wyth her in wyne no altercacion
Lest that thyne hert fal by enclinacion

Wyll a man thynkest hyde and safe lay
Fyre in his bosom, wythout empayrement
of brennyng of his clothes, or whether he may
walke on hotte coles, his fete not brent
As who sayth nay, and wherby is ment
Thys forsayd prouerbe and similitude
But that thou cydde the playnly to denude

From the flatterers forgettyng her gyde
The gyde of her youth, I meane thafaithes
which shulde cause her mayden hed to abide
Her goddes beheft eke she ful recheleste
Not retchyng, committeth it to forgetfulnesse
Neyther god ne shame in her hauynge place
Wodes must such a woman lacke grace

And al that neygh her in way of syn
To ruine of grace shal lacke the influence
The pathes of lyfe no more to come in
wyl, forsoke fyrst frende the wyth sapience
Remembryng god, and after wyth prudence
To thyne owne wele that they the kepe
Unto thyne herte, leste her wordes crepe

In this boke where I take my most grounde
And in hys prouerbes sage Solomon
Telleth a tale, whych is playnly founde
In the fyfth chapiter, whether in dede don
Or meekely ferned to our instruction
Let clerkes determyne, but thus I am sure
Much lyke thyng I haue had in vre

At my wyndowe sayth he I loked out
Fayre yonge people, where I sawe many
Amonge hem all, as I loked about
To a yonge man fortuned I lent myne eye
Straunged from his mynde it was lykely
By the strete at a corner, nygh his owne hous
He went about wyth eye tyght curyous

Whā that the day his lyght gan withdrawe
And the nyght approched in the twylyght
Howe a woman came and met him I sawe
Talkyng with him vnder shade of the night
Nowe blyssed be god & she of his myght
whych hath fulfylled myne hertes desyre
Slaked my paines, which wer hote as fire

And yet myne auctour, as it is skyl
To folowe, I must tel her aray ment
She was ful nyce, fondes lyke to spyl
As nyce in countenaunce yet as in garment
For tanglyng she was of rest impacient
wandryng fyrst in no place she stode
But restlesse nowe and nowe out she rode

Nowe in the house, nowe in the strete
Nowe at a corner she stondeth in awarte
Incessauntly besy her praye for to gete
To bryngе to the lure whom she doth layte
Now where I left, vnto my mater strayte
I wol turne agayne, howe she him mette,
Swetely kyssed, and frendly hym greette

With wordes of curtesy many and diuerse
Ryght as in parte I haue before tolde
Nowe as I can I purpose to reherse
How she flatteryng sayd wyth vysage bolde
I haue made bowes & offrynges manyfolde
For thy sake, O myne hert, O my loue dere
This day I thāke god al perfourmed were

Therfore I came out, and made thus astert
Very desyrous your welfare to se
Now I haue seue you, pleased is myne hert
In fayth shall none haue my loue but ye
As trewe as I am to you be to me
I praye you hertely dere herte come home
No man shulde be to me so welcome

And

And in good fayth, the soth for to say
Your comynge to me canne in my thought
Darke in your care, my bed freshe and gay
I haue behanged wt tapettes newe bought
Frō Egypt, & from ferre countrees brought
Steyned wyth many a lusty freshe hue
Creedyng golde or Jasper in value

My chābre is strowed with myrre & ensence
With sote sauourng aloes, & with synamome
Breathyng an aromatyke redolence
Surmountyng oryent in any mans dome
Ye shall betwene my brestes rest yt ye come
Let vs haue our desyred hallyng
For we maye safe be tyl in the morynyng

Wyne husbonde is not at home, he is went
Forth in hys iourney, a ferre way hence
A bagge with money he hath wt him hent
As hym thought nedeful for hys expence
Unto my worde gyue fayth and credence
Newe is the mone ponge, & of syght dulle
Or he come home it woll be at the fulle

Thus craftely hath she hym besette
Wyth her lyme rod des payred and snare
The sely soule caught in her nette
Of her fayned mouth alas nothyng ware
Thus is he lefte graceles and bare
Of helpe comforte and goostly socour
And furthermore as sayth myne auctour

As a beest ledde to hys deth doth pant
Thys ponge man foloweth her in y stoude
And as a wanton lambe ful ignorant
Howe he is pulled and drawen to be bouñde
Unto the tyme he hath hys dethes wounde
And lyke a bryde that hasteth to the gryme
Not knowyng the peryll of his lyfe therin

Now gentle sone sayth Salomon take hede
Wyp wordes in thy brest kepe and make fast
Let her not thy mynde in her wayes mislede
Be not discerned lese not thy tast
Many hath she wounded, many downe cast
Ye many stronge by her hath lost theyr breth
Her wayes, wayes of hel leadyng to deth

And in thys lytle naration precident
The womans manyfolde gylt I attende
The ponge man alas howe she hath shent
Disceyued her husbāde, her owne nere frēde
In these both her God she doth offende
To breke her spousayle, to her is of no worst
Furdermore to shew womans craft & sleight

A woman at her doze sate on a sal
To se folkes passe by stretes of the cite
Wyth eye & countenaunce eke she gan cal
If there be any prety one, come nere to me
Come hyther ye pygges nye, ye lytle babe
At last she sayd to a ponge man herkenyng
Of her disceyte vnware and defenceles

Much swetter she sayth, & more acceptable
Is drynke wham it is stolen prively
Than whā it is taken in fourme auowable
Bred hyd and gotten ieoperdously
Must nedes be swete, and semblably
Venyson stolne is aye the swetter
The ferther the narower fetce the better

And whō thys womā sayth Solomō teaches
The yong ma woteth not whō she doth lede
Of the derke depenesse of hel bene her gates
Beware ponge man therfore I the rede
And howe be it chefely for thy good spede
This wythe to cōple, I haue take in charge
I must of pyte my charyte enlarge.

wyth the sely man which is thus begyled
Der hu band I meane, I wol wepe & wayle
Hys payneful infortune wherby exyled
Tanieleſſe he is neuer to conmayle
Euery man ponge & olde wyl him assayle
wyth wordes of reproch, with y loth name
And alas good soule, he nothynge to blame

But she that coude so yl do and wolde
Hers be the blame for her demerite
And leaue that opprobrious name cokolde
To apropre to hym as in dispyte
Nauſake yet we wolde yt we myght
Of thys worde the ferwe ortography
The very discent and ethymology

The wel and grounde of the fyrst enuention
To knowe the ortography we must dertue
Which is coke and colde, in composicion
By reason as nyghe as I can contrue
Than howe it is written we knowe belyue
But yet to, by what reason and grounde
Was it of these two wordes compounde

As of one cause to gyue very iugement
Themylogy let vs fyrst beholde
Eche letter an hole worde doth represent
As C, put for colde, and O, for olde
K, is for knaue, thus diuers men holde
The fyrst part of thys name we haue soude
Let vs ethymologyse the secounde

As the fyrst fynder mente I am sure
C, for calot, for of we haue O
L, for leude, D, for demeanure
The crafte of the inuentour ye may se lo
Howe one name signifyeth persons two
A colde olde knaue, cokolde him self wening
And eke a calot of leude demeanyng

The secounde cause of thrmpolycion
Of thys forsayde name was ielousye
To be ielouse is greatest occasyon
To be cokolde, that men can aspye
And though the passyon be very fyrye
And of contynuel feruence and hete
The patient aye suffreth colde on hys fete

And who that is ielous, and aye in a drede
Is ful of melancoly and gally ye
Hys yyues nose yf she mule trede
He wolde cutte of, ye and conspyre
His death who that wol her defyre
Wyth the perceyuyng brasteth hys gal
And anone hys great wodenesse doth tal

As sone as she hath knytte him that knot
Nowe is he tame that was so ramagious
Meekely syttyth he downe and taketh his lot
Layd lene nowe hys lokes so furyous
And he but late as a cocke bataylous
Wote in hys quarel, to auenge hym bolde
Nowe is he called both coke and colde

Thys sayeng, to al curtesy dissonant
Wherch semeth that it of malyce grewe
In this rude treatyse I wol not plant
As parcel therof, but onely to shewe
The opinion of the calcatyfe shrewe
Wherch in yl sayeng is euer mery
No man as I therof so wery

But I as parcel of thys my boke
Woll graffe in some sadde counsayle wherby
The wedded man, yf he daigne to loke
In it, the better shal mowe him gye
And proued for hys sayd infortunye
Whyche as I haue sayd, with hym cõplayne
I wol, as partener of hys great payne

As mooste expedient to hys wele
I wolde al ielously were abiecte
If he be ielous, that he it concele
And in his labour be circumspecte
To knowe her wayes, yf they seme suspecte
And not for to breke, for one worde broken
She wol not mysse but she wol be wroken

Forbyd her not, that thou noldest haue done
For loke what thinge she is forbood
To that of al thynges she is mooste prone
Namely yf it be yl and no good
Tyll it be executed she is nygh wood
Such is woman, and such is her state
Her crafte by crafte, labour to defeate

If thou hereafter, nowe a syngle man
Shuldest be ielous yf thou haddest a wyfe
we dde not but yf thou can trust woman
For els shuldest lede a careful lyfe,
That thou mooste forbest shulde be full ryfe
Yet I nyl gaynsay matrimony
But Melius est nubere quam vri.

That is to saye, better is in wedlocke
A wyfe to take, as the church doth kenne
Than to be vnder the fleshes yoke
In fleshly lust alwaye for to brenne
But as I sayd, for all ielous men
Soother tyme chaste, I holde it alle vll
That they wedde not, than them selfe spyll

The syngle man whych is yet to wedde
And not the wedded man, thus I rede
To warne him nowe he is to tarte spedde
It is to late him for to forbede
But let him take as for his owne nede,
Such counsayle as is hym before tolde
These wordes folowyng eke he beholde

Thy water to kepe the wyse man doth teche
That thou in no wyse let it haue issue
At a narowe ryfte, way it wol seche
And semblably the woman vntrewe
To gyue her fre walke in all wyse eschewe
If she at large, not at thyne hande walke
She wol the shame, thou shalt it not balke

wedded

wedded or syngle, thus sayth the wyse man
Her that both day and nyght euermore
Lyeth in thy bosome, wyfe or yet lemman
Loue not to hote, lest thou repent sore
Lest she the bryng into some yll lore
Thy wyfe not to loue yet I nyll suppoze
But that thou dote not, thus I the exhoze.

Lo if thou loue her, loue eke thyne honestie
Be she not ydle, for what woll betyde
Yf she syt ydle, of very necessitie
Her mynde woll serche ferre and eke wyde
Namely yf she be not accompanyde
Dowe accopanyed not with yonge men
But with maydens I meane, or women

Yarden seruauntes be ryght conuenient
In house to helpe to do her seruyce
In whom she maye vse her comaundement
In the season at her owne deuyse
To teache hem good, yeue her thyne aduyce
To make them huswyues, thus besyneslle
May yet restrayne her from ydelnesse.

But byd her not that thou wolt haue do
Of thyne entent that myght be letting
But craftely encourage her therto
By other meanes as by comendyng
And not to moche, but duly menging
Both prayse and blame, and in thy reason
I will prayse wysely the place and season

Of faythfull wyll and herte full tendre
One thynge I call into remembraunce
Ayayne which though my wyt be slendre
After my power and sufficiaunce
I purpose to make a puruyaunce
Syth women of nature ben chaungeable
Frayle, not ware, also disceyuable.

Be it that thy wyfe be excellently good
That none be better of disposicion
In proces of tyme she might turne her mode
By some mysruers instigation
Dyuers men to thyike occupation
Applyen dayly, mynde and eke herte
From her goodnesse women to peruerte.

Yf thou espye any suspect person
Draw to thy wyfe, beware in all wyse
To hym nor her of thy suspection
Speke not one word, thouz thy herte agryse
Kyndle no fyre, no smoke woll aryse
Though he be of a corrupt entent
She paraduenture is not of assent.

Explicit.

The complaynt of Mars and Venus.



Laddeth ye louers in the morowe graye
Lo venus rysse amõg you rowes rede
And floures fresh honour ye this daye
For whan ỹ sunne vp rist tha wil they spred
But ye louers, that in any drede
Flyeth, lest wycked tonges you espye
Lo yonde the sunne, the candle of ielousye

With teres blewe, and with a wounded herte
Taketh your leue, ỹ vp saunt Iohn to borowe
Apeseth somwhat of your sorowes smert
Tyme cometh eft, ỹ cessen shal your sorowe
The glad nyghtes worth an heuy morowe
Sayut Valentyne a foule this herd I sing
Upon thy day or sunne gan vp springe.

Yet sange this foule, I rede you all awake
And ye that haue not chosen in humble wyse
Without repentyng cheseth your make
Yet at the lest, remoueleth your seruyce
And ye that haue full chosen as I deuyse
Confermeth it perpetually to dure
And paciently taketh your auenture.

And for the worshyp of this hye feest
Yet wol I in my bryddes wyse synge
The sentence of the complaynt at the lest
That wofull Mars made at the departing
Fro fresh Venus in a morowenyng
Whan Phebus with his fyry torches rede
Ransaked hath euery louer in his drede.

Whylom the thre heuens lorde aboue

As well by heuenlyche reuolution
As by desert hath won Venus his loue
And she hath take hym in subiection
And as a maystresse taught hym his lesson
Cõmaundynge hym neuer in her seruyce
He were so bolde no louer to dispyse

For she forbade hym ielousye at all
And cruelte and boste and tyrannye
She made hym at her lust so humble y tall
That whã she dayned to cast on hym her eye
He toke in patience to lyue or dye
And thus she brydleth hym in her manere
With nothing but ỹ scornyng of her chere.

Who raygneth now in blysse but Venus
ỹ hath this worthy knyght in gouernaunce
Who singeth now but Mars ỹ serueth thus
The fayre Venus, causer of pleasaunce
He bynt hym to perpetual obeysaunce
And she bynt her to loue hym for euer
But to be that his trespalle it disseuer

Thus be they knyt and reignen as in heuen
Beholdyng most, as it fel on a tyde
That by her both assent was set a steuen
That Mars shall entre as fast as he may
Into her nett paleys to abyde (glyde
Walkyng his course tyl she had hym atake
And he prayed her to halse her for his sake.

Than sayd he thus, my hertes lady swete
Ye knowe wel my myschefe in that place
For sykerly tyl that I with you mete
My syke stant there in auenture and grace
But whan I se the beautye of your face
There is no drede of deth may do me smerte
For all your lust is ease to myne hert

She hath so great cõpassyon of her knyght
That dwelleth in solytude tyl she come
For it stode so that thylke tyme no wyght
Counsayled hym, ne sayd to hym welcome
That nygh her wyt for sorowe was ourrõ
wherfore she sped as fast in her way
Almost in one day as he dyd in twaye

The great loye that was betwyxt hem two
whan they be met, there may no tonge tell
There is nomore, but vnto bed they go
And thus in loye and blysse I let hem dwel
This worthy Mars ỹ is of knyghthod wel
The flour of fairnesse happeth in his armes
And venus kysseth Mars ỹ god of armes

Soiorned hath this Mars, of which I rede
In chambre amydde the palays pruely
A certayne tyme, tyl hym fel a drede
Through Phebus that was comen hastely
within the palays yates sturdely
with torch in hand, of which ỹ stremes brist
On venus chambre knocketh ful lyght

The chambre there as lay this fresshe quene
Depaynted was with whyte boles grete
And by ỹ lyght she knewe that shon so shene
That Phebus came to bren hem vp his hete
This selly Venus me dremt in teares wete
Embraceth Mars, and sayd alas I dye
The torch is com ỹ al this world wyl wraye

Vp sterte Mars, hym lyst not to slepe
whan he his lady herde so complayne
But for his nature was not for to wepe
In stede of teares from his eyen twayne
The fyry sparcles sprongen out for payne
And bent his hauberke ỹ lay hym before
Eye wold he nought, ne might hym fro hyde.

He throweth on his helme of huge weyght
And gyrt hym vp his swerde, y in his hond
His mighty spere as he was wont to fyght
He shaketh so that it almost to wonde
Full heuy was he to waken out of londe
He may not holde with Venus company
But bad her flyen lest Phebus her espye

O woful Mars alas, what mayst ỹ sayne
That in the palays of thy disturbaunce
Art left behynde in peryl to be slayne
And yet therto is double thy penaunce
For she ỹ hath thyne hert in gouernaunce
Is passed halfe the sterines of thyne eyen
That ỹ were swyft, wel mayest thou wep ỹ

(er en

Now flyeth Venus into Cithinius toure
with sorde corse, for feare of Phebus lyght
Alas, and there hath she no socour
For she ne toude ne lerned no maner wyght
And eke as there she had but lytle myght
wherfore her seluen for to hyde and saue
within the gate she fled into a caue.

Darke was this caue, and smokig as ỹ hell

Nat

Nat but two paas within the yate it stode
I natures day in darke I let her dwell
Now wot I spekе of mars furious & wode
For sorow he wolde haue sene his herte blod
Syth þ he might haue done her no cõpanye
He ne rought not a myte for to dye

So feble he wert for hete and for his wo
That nigh he swelt, he might vneth endure
He passeth but a sterr in dayes two
But neuertheless, for al his heuy armure
He foloweth her that is his lyues cure
For whose departyng he toke greater eyre
Than for all his brennyng in the fyre

After he walketh softely apace
Complayning, that it pyte was to here
He sayd, O lady bryght Venus alas
That euer so wyde a cõpas is my sphere
Alas, whan shall I mete you here here
This twelue dayes of Aprell I endure
Through ielous Phebus this mysaduenture

Now god helpe fely Venus alone
But as god wolde it happed for to be
That whyl þ weping venus made her mone
Cytherus tydyng in his chyrnache
Fro Venus Vulcanus might his palays se
And venus he saluteth and maketh chere
And her receyueth as his trouthe fal here.

Mars dwelleth forth in his aduersite
Complayning euer in her departyng
And what his cõplaynt was remembreth me
And therfore in this lusty morowenyng
As I best can, I wol it sayne and synge
And after that I woll my leaue take
And god sende euery wyght ioy of his make

¶ The complaynt of Mars.

The ordre of complaynt requyreth skylfully
That yf a wyght shall playne pytously
There mote be cause wherfore þ mẽ playne
Or men may deme he playneth folyly
And causeles alas that am not I
wherfore þ grounde & cause of al my payne
So as my troubled wyt may it attayne
I wol reherse, not for to haue redresse
But to declare my grounde of heuynesse

The fyrst tyme alas, that I was wrought
And for certayne effectes hyder brought
By hym that lorderth eche intelligence
I saue my true seruyce and my thought
For euermo how dere I haue it bought
To her that is of so great excellence
That what wight þ sheweth first her offence
whan she is wroth, & taketh of him no cure
He may not longe in ioye of loue endure

This is no fayned mater that I tell
My lady is the very sours and well
Of beautie, lust, freedome and genteelesse
Of eyche araye how dere men it sell
Of all disport in which men freely dwell
Of loue and play, and of benigne bublesse
Of sowne of instrumentes, & of al swetnesse
And therto so well fortuned and the weel
þ through þ worlde her goodnes is shewed

what wonder is than though that I her
My seruyce on such one that may me helpe
To wele or wo, sith it lyth in her myght
Therfore mine herte for euer I vnto her
Be truly for my deth shal I not let
To shew her trueth seruaunt & her knyght
I flatter not, that may wete euery wight
For this day in her seruyce shall I dye
But grace be, I se her neuer with eye

To whom shal I playne of mine vnright
who may me helpe, who may my herte glade
Shall I complayne vnto my lady bryght
Nay certes, for she hath such heuynesse
For feare and eke for wo that as I gesse
In lyttle tyme it wolde her bane be
But were the case, it were no force of me
Alas that euer louers more endure
For loue so many perylous auenture

For though so be that louers be as trewe
As any metall that is forged newe
In many a case hem tydeth oft sorowe
Sometyme her ladyes wol not on hem rewe
Sometyme yf that ielousye it knewe
They myght lyghtly lay her heed to borowe
Sometyme enuyous folke in tunges borowe
Depraue hem alas, whom may they plese
But he be falle, no louer hath his ease.

But what auayleth suche a longe sermoun
Of auentures of loue vp and downe

I woll

I woll retourne, and speken of my payne
The poynt is this of my destructioun
My ryght lady, my saluacioun
Is in a fray, and not to whom to playne
O hert swete, O lady soueravne
For your disese I ought wel swoun & swelt
Though I none other harme ne drede felt

To what fyne made the god that syt so hye
Beneth hym loue other company
And straineth folke to loue maugre her heed
And than her love, for ought I can espye
He lasteth not the twynklyng of an eye
And some haue neuer love tyll they be deed
what meaneth this, what is this mysthed
wherto constrayneth he his folke so fast
Thynge to desyre, but it shulde last

And though he made a louer loue a thyng
And maketh it seme stedfast and durying
Yet putteth he in it suche misaventure
That rest nys there in his pevying
And that is wondre that so iust a kynge
Doth suche hardnesse to his creature
Thus whether loue bicke or els dure
Algates he that hath with loue to done
Hath otter wo than chaunged is the mone

It semeth he hath to louers enmitie
And lyke a fysher as men may all daye se
Sayteth his angle hoke with some plesaunce
Tyl many a fysh is wode to that he be
Ceased therwith, and than at erst hath he
Al his desyre, and therwith al mischaunce
And though thyne bicke he hath penaunce
For with that hoke he wounded is so sore
That he his wages hath for euermore

The broche of Thebes was of suche kynde
So full of rubies and of stones of Inde
That euery wyght that set on it an eye
He wende anon worth out of his mynde
So sore the beautie wolde his hert bynde
Tyl he it had, him thought he must dye
And whan that it was his than shulde he
Such wo for dred ay, while þ he it had dyp
That welnygh for the feare he shuld mad

And whan it was fro his possessyon
Than had he double wo and passyon
That he so fayre a iewel hath forgo
But yet this broche as in conclusyon
was not the cause of his confusyon
But he that wrought it enfortuned it so
That euery wyght þ had it shulde haue wo
And therfore in the worcher was the vyce
And in the coueyture that was so nyce

So fareth it by louers, and by me
For though my lady haue so great beautie
That I was made to, I had get her grace
She was not cause of myne aduersitye
But he that wrought her, as mote I the
That put suche a beautye in her face
That made me coueyten and purchace
Myne owne deth hym wyte I that I dye
And myne vnwyt þ euer I clambe so hye.

But to you hardy knyghtes of renowne
Syth that ye be of my deuysyoun
Al be, I nat worthy to so great a name
Yet sayne these clerkes I am your patrone
Therfore ye ought haue some compassioun
Of my disease, and take it nat a game
The proudest of you may be made full tame
wherfore I pray you of voure gentylesse
That ye complaynt for myne heuynesse

And ye my ladyes that ben true and stable
By way of kynde ye ought to ben able
To haue pytye of folke that ben in payne
Now haue ye cause to clothe you in sable
Syth that your empires the honorable
Is desolate, wel ought ye to playne
Now shulde your holy teares fal & rayne
Alas your honour and your empyre
Nygh deed for drede, ne can her not chevyse

Complayneth eke ye louers al in fere
For her that with vnfayned humble chere
was euer redy to do you socour
Complayneth her that euer hath be you dere
Complayneth beautye, fredome and, manere
Complayneth her that endeth your labour
Complayneth thylke ensample of al honour
That neuer dyd but gentilenesse
Kytheth therfore in her some kyndnesse.

¶ The complaynt of Uenus.



Here nys so hygh comfort to my pleasaunce
whan that I am in anye heuynesse
Is for to haue layser of remembraunce
Upon the manhode and the worthynesse
Upon the trouth and on the stedfastnesse
Of hym whose I am all whyle I may dure
There ought to blame me no creature
For euery wight prayseth his gentylesse

In hym is bountie, wysdome & gouernaūce
wel more than any mans wyt can gesse
For grace hath wolde so farforth hym auan
That of knyghthode he is partyt ryches
Honour honoureth hym for his noblesse
Therto so wel hath fourmed hym nature
That I am his for euer I hym ensure
For euery wyght prayseth his gentylesse

And notwithstandyng all his sufficyaunce
his gentle hert is of so great humblesse
To me in worde, in werke & in countenaūce
And me to serue is all his besynesse
That I am set in very sykernesse
Thus ought I blysse wel myne auenture
Syth that hym lyst me seruen & honoure
For euery wyght prayseth his gentylesse

Now certes loue it is ryght conuenable
That men full dere abye thy noble thynges
As wake a bed, and fasten at the table
Weping to laugh, & syng in complaynynges
And downe to cast vysage and lokynges
Often to chaunge vysage & countenaunce
Playe in slepyng, & dremen at the daunce
All the reuers of any glad felynge

Ielousye he hanged by a cable
She wolde al knowe through her espyynge
There doth no wyght nothyng so reprouable
That all nys harme in her ymaginyng
Thus dere abought is loue in yeuyng
which oft he yeueth without ordinaunce
As sorowe ynough, and lytle of plesaunce
All the reuers of any glad felynge

A lytle tyme his yefte is agreable
But full accombrouse is the vsyng
For subtel ielousye the deceyuable
Ful often tyme causeth dystourbyng
Thus ben we euer in drede and suffryng
In no certayne, we languyshen in penaunce
And haue wel oft many an harde myschaūce
All the reuers of any glad felyng

But certes, loue I saye not in suche wyse
That for to scape out of your lace I ment
For I so longe haue ben in your seruyce
That for to lete of wyll I neuer assent
No force though ielousye me tourment
Suffyseth me to se hym whan I may
And therfore certes to myne endyng day
To loue hym best shal me neuer repent

And certes loue, whan I me wel auyse
Of any estate that men may represent
Than haue ye made me through your [illegible]
Chese the best that euer in erth went
Now loue wel hert and loke thou neuer [illegible]
And let the ielous put it in assaye
That for no payne woll I not fayntay
To loue hym best, shal I neuer repent

Herte to the it ought ynough suffyse
That loue so hye a grace to you sent
To chose the worthyest in all wyse
And moost agreable vnto myne entent
Seke no further, nyther way ne wynde
Syth ye haue suffysaunce vnto my payne
Thus wol I ende this complaynynge of this
To loue hym best shal I neuer repent

¶ Lenuoye.



Kynges receyueth this complayninge in gree
Unto your excellet benignite
Dyrecte after my lytle suffysaunce
For ryde, that in my spirit dul
Hath of indytyng al the subtilte
Welnygh beraft out of my remembraunce
And eke to me it is a great penaunce
Sith ryme in englysh hath suche scarcite
To folowe worde by worde the curiosite
Of Stansons toure, of hem that make in Fraunce.

¶ Explicit.

Here

Thereafter foloweth the letter of Cuppde.



Uppde, vnto whose commaundement
The gentyl kynred of goddes on hye
And people infernall bene obeddyent
And al mortall folke serue busyye
Of the goddesse sone Cythera onely
To all tho that to our deitie
Ben subiectes, hertely greetyng sende we

In generall we wolde that ye knowe
That ladyes of honour and of reuerence
And other gentyl women hauen sowe
Suche seed of cõplaynt in our audyence
Of men that do hem outrage and offence
That it our eares greueth for to here
So pytous is theffect of this matere

Passyng al londes on the lytle yle
That clepeth this Albyon, they most cõplayne
They say that there is crop and rote of gyle
So con tho men dissymule and fayne
With flandryng tropes in her even twayne
What that her hertes frieth no distresse
To blynden women with her doublenesse.

Her wordes spoken be so syghingly
With so pytous chere and countenaunce
That euery wyght that meneth truly
Demeth they in hert haue suche greuaunce
They say so importable is her penaunce
That but her lady lust to shewe hem grace
They wyl algat anon muste sterue in the place

O lady myne they saye, I you ensure
As doth me grace, and I shall euer be
Whyle that my lyfe may last and endure
To you as humble and lowe in eche degree
As possyble is, and kepe al thynges as secre
Right as your selfe lyst that I do
And els myne hert mote brast in two

Ful harde it is to knowe a mans hert
For outwarde may no mã the trouth deme
What worde out of mouth may none sterte
But it by reso semed euery wyght to queme
So it is sayde of hert as it wolde seme
O faythful woman ful of innocence
Thou art disceued by false apparence

By proces moueth oft womans pytie
Weenyng all thyng were as these men say
They graunt hem grace of her benignitie
For that men shulde not for her sake dey
And with good hert set hem in the wey
Of blysful loue, kepe it yf they con
And thus otherwhyle women beth ywon

And whan this man ỹ pan hath by the stele
And fully is in his possessyoun
With that woman kepeth be nomore to dele
After yf he may fynde in the toun
Any woman his blynde affectioun
Vnto bestowe, euyl mote he prene
A man for al his othes is harde to beleue

And for that euery falseman hath a make
As vnto euery wight is ryght to knowe
What this traytour this womã hath forsake
He saste spedeth him vnto his felowe
Tyl he be there his herte is on a lowe
His false desyre may him not sustyne
But of his treason telleth al the wyne

Is this a fayre anaunt is this honoure
A man him selfe accuse this and diffame
Is it good to confesse him selfe a traytour
And bringe a woman to sclaundres name
And tell howe he her body hath do shame
No worshyp may be thus to him conquer
But great disclaundre vnto hym and her

To her nay, yet was it no repreue
For al for vertue was that she wrought
But he that dyscwed hath al this myschefe
ỹ spake so fayre, a falsly inward thought
His be the sclaundre, as it by reason ought
And vnto her thanke perpetuel
That in suche a nede helpe can so well

Although through mens sleyght & subtelitie
A sely symple and innocent woman
Betrayde is, no wondre seth the cytie
Of Troye, as the story tell can
Betrayde was through the disceyte of man
And set on fyre, and al downe ouerthrowe
And finally destroyed as men knowe.

Betraye

Betray nat men cytes great and kynges
what wight is it that can shape remedy
Ayenst these falsely purposed thynges
who can the crafte suche crafftes espy
But man, whose wytte is euer redy tapply
To thyng that sowneng in to falsehede
women be the ware of false men I rede

And furthermore haue these men in vsage
That where they nat lykely ben to spede
Suche as they ben, with a double visage
They procuren for to pursewe her nede
He prayeth hem in his cause to procede
And largely guerdoneth he his trauayle
Lytell wote women howe men hem assayle

Another wretche vnto his felowe sayth
Thou fyndest faire, she that she hath fayed
Is false inconstaunt and hath no fayth
So be for the rode of folke is so desyred
And as an horse fro day to day she is hyred
That whan thou rydest fro her company
Cometh another and bleered is thyne eye

Howe pricke on fast and rede thy tournay
while thou art there for she behynd thy backe
So lyter all is the well nothyng withsey
But smartly of another take a smacke
Thus fare these women all the packe
who so hem trusteth hanged mote he be
Euer they desyre chaunge and nouelte

Wherof procedeth this but of enuye
For be hun selfe her ne wynne may
He speketh her to prete and vylany
As maunes blabbyng tong is wont alway
Thus dyuers men full ofte make assay
For to dastourbe folke in sondrye wyse
For they may nat eschewe her emprise

If any one eke wolde for no good
That hath in loue hys teme spent and sped
Then wyst ye his lady hys asking withstode
Er that he were of her playnly refused
Or waste and barne all that he had mused
wherfore he can none other remedy
But on his lady shapeth hym to lye

Euery woman he sayethe is fryght to gete
Can none say nay, yf she be well wrought
Who so may leyser haue with her to trete
Of hys purpose shall he fayle nought
But be on madnesse be so depe brought
That he shende all with open bonnynesse
That louen women, they doten as I gesse

To slaunder women thus what may profyte
To gentylesse namely that hem armeshulde
In defence of women, and hem delyte
As that the ordre of gentylesse wolde
If that a man lyst gentyll to be holde
He muste all eschewe that therto is contrary
A slaundrous tonge is hys great aduersary

A foule vyce is of tonge to be lyght
For who so moche clapperh gabberh ofte
The tonge of man so swyfte is and so wight
That whan it is reysed vp on lofte
Reason is shewed so slowly and softe
That it hym neuer ouertake may
Lorde so these men ben trusty in assay

All be it that men fynde one woman nyce
Inconstaunt, reckelesse, and wayvable
Deynous, proude, fullfylled of malyce
wythout fayethe or loue, and dysceyuable
Lyke quevit, false, in all vntrust coulpable
wycked feerse, or full of cruelte
Yet foloweth it not that suche all women be

Whan the hyghe god aungels fourmed had
Amonge hem all, were there none
That founden was malicious and bade
Yes all men wote there were many one
That for her pryde fyll fro heuen anone
Shuld me for thy veue al angels proude nay
Nay, he that y^ fullyeneth is to blame

Of twelue apostels one a traytour was
The remenaunte yet good were and trewe
So yf it happe men fynde perfas
A woman false suche good is to eschewe
And deme not y^ they al therfore be vntrewe
Yfe well mennes owne falsenesse
Hem causeth woman to trust the lesse

Euery man ought haue an herte tendre
Vnto a woman and deme her honourable
where hys shape be thycke or slendre
Or he be good or badde, it is no fable
Euery wight wote y^ wytte hath resonable
That of a woman he descended is
Than is it shame of her to speke amysse

A wicked tre good fruite may non forthbring

For suche the frute is as is the tre
Take hede of who thou take thy begynning
Let thy mother be myrrour vnto the
Honour her, yf thou wolte honoured be
Dispyse her than not in no maniere
Lest that therby thy wyckednesse apere

An olde prouerbe sayd is in englysshe
That byrde or foule is full dishoneste
What that he be, and holde full churlysshe
That vseth to defoule hys owne neste
Men to say well of women it is the beste
And naught to dispyse hem ne depraue
If they wolde her honour kepe or saue

The ladyes euer complayne hem on clerkes
That they haue made bokes of her diffame.
In which they dispyse women & her werkes
And spoke of hem great reproffe and shame
And causeleste yeue hem a wicked name
Thus they dispysed be on euery syde
Diffamed and blowen on full wyde

Tho forp bokes maken mencion
Howe women betrayde in especiall
Adam, Dauid, Sampson, and Salomon
And many one mo, who may reherse hem al
The treyson that they haue do and shall
The worlde her malyce may not comprehende
As clerkes sayne, for it hath none ende

Ouyde in hys boke called Remedye
Of loue, great reproffe of women writeth
wherin I trowe he dyd great folye
And euery wight þ in such case him delyteth
A clerkes custome is whan he endyteth
Of women, be it prose, ryme or vers
Say they be wycked, all know be the rehers

And þ boke scholers lerned in her childhede
For they of women beware shulde in age
And to loue hem euer be in drede
Sythe to disceyue is set all her corage
They say of perel me should cast thauntage
Namely of suche as men haue in bewrapped
For many a man by women hath mishapped

No charge is what so these clerkes sayne
Of all her writyng I do no cure
All her labour and trauayle is in vayne
For betwene me and my lady nature
Shall not be suffred, while þ world may dure
Thus these clerkes by her cruell tyrannye
On sely women kythen her maystrye

Whylom for many of hē were in my cheyne
Tyed, and nowe for vnwieldy age
And vnlust, may not to loue atteyne
And sayne now that loue is but very dotage
Thus for they hem selfe lacken corage
They folke excyte by her wicked sawes
For to rebell ayenst me and my lawes

But maugre hem that blame women moste
Suche is the force of myne vnpressyon
That sodaynly I can tell her boste
And all her wronge ymagination
It shall not be in her election
The fowlest slutte in all the towne to refuse
If that me lust, for al that they conne muse

But her in herte as brennyngly desyre
As though she were a duchesse or a quene
So can I folkes hertes set on fyre
And as me lyst sende hem loye or tene
They that to women be wher so kene
Why sharpe persyng strokes how they smyte
Shal fele & know howe they herte and byte

Harde thus clerke, thus sir tyll Ouyde
And many an other disceyued haue be
Of women, as it is knowe full wyde
what no men more, and that is great deynte
So excellent a clerke as was he
And other mo that couden full well preche
Betrapped were, for aught þ they coude teche

And trusteth well that it is no mervayle
For women knowen playnly her entent
They wolde be we softly they coude assayle
Hem and what falsherd they in herte mente
And thus they clerkes in her daunger hente
wyth o wemmen an other is distroyed
And thus these clerkes ofte were anoyed

These ladyes me these gentyls neuertheleste
were none of tho that wrought in this wyse
But suche as were vertuleste
They quyten thus these olde clerkes wyse
To clerkes lesse ought suffyse
Than to dispraue women generally
For worshyp shall they none get therby

If that these men, that louers hem pretende
To women

To women were faythfull, good, and trewe
And dredde hem to disceyue, or to offende
women to loue hem wolde not eschewe
But euery day hath man an herte newe
Ye on one abyde can no whyle
what force is it suche a wight to begyle

Men beare eke women vpon honde
That lightly and without any payne
They wonne be, they can no wight withstonde
That his disease lyst to hem complayne
They be so freele, they may be not restrayne
But who so lyketh hem may lightly haue
So be her hertes easy in to graue

To mayster Johan de Meone, as I suppose
Than it was a leude occupacioun
In making of the Romaunte of the rose
So many a slyghe ymagynacioun
And peryles for to rollen vp and doun
The longe processe, so many a slyghe cautell
For to disceyue a fely damoysell

Aught can I say, ne my wytte comprehende
That arte, payne, and subtylte shulde fayle
For to conquere and some make an ende
whan men a feble place shall assayle
And some also to venquisshe a batayle
Of whiche no wight may make resystence
Ne herte hath none to make any defence

Than more folowe of necessyte
Sythe arte asketh so great engyn & payne
A woman to disceyue what so he be
Of custaunce be they not so barayne
As that some of these clerkes fayne
But they be as women ought to be
Sadde, constaunte, and fulfylled of pyte

Howe frendly was Medea to Jason
In conquerynge of the fleece of golde
Howe falsely quyt he her trewe affection
By whom vyctorie he gate as he wolde
Howe may this man for shame be so bolde
To falsen her that fro his dethe and shame
Hym kept, and gate him so great prise & name

Of Troy also the traytour Eneas
The faythlesse wretch, how he him forswore
To Dydo that quene of Cartage was
That him releued of hys sinertes sore
what gentylesse might she haue do more
Than she with herte vnfayned to him kydde
And what myschefe to her therof after betydde

In my legende of natures may men fynde
who so lyketh therin for to rede
That othe ne behest may man bynde
Of reprouable shame haue they no drede
In mannes herte trouth hath no stede
The soyle is naught, there may no trouth growe
To women namely it is not vnknowe

Clerkes sayne also there is no malyce
Unto womans wycked crabbydnesse
O woman, how shalt thou thy selfe chevyce
Sythe men of the suche harme wytnesse
Beth ware women of her sykelnesse
Kepe thyne owne, what men clappe or crake
And some of hem that sinerte I vndertake

Malyce of women what is it to dredde
They slee no man, distroye no cytes
Ne oppresse folke, ne ouerlede
Betray empires, realmes, or duchees
Ne bryeuen men her londes ne her medes
Empoyson folke, ne houses set on fyre
Ne false contractes make for no hyre

Trust, parfyte loue, entyre charyte
Feruent wyll, and entalented corage
All thewes good, as fytteth well to be
Haue women euer of custome and vsage
And wel they conne manes pyte asswage
with soft wordes discrete & benygne
what they be inwarde they shew outwarde by

womans herte vnto no cruelte
Enclyned is, but they be charytable
Pytous, deuoute, full of humylite
Shamefaste, debonayre, and amyable
Dredefull, and of wordes measurable
what women these haue not, parauenture
Foloweth not the way of her nature

Men sayne our fyrst mother natheles
Made all mankynde lese his lyberte
And naked it of love deutiesse
For goddes heste disobeyed she
whan she presumed to taste of the tre
That god forbade, that she eate therof sholde
And ne had the dyuell be, nomore she wolde

The enuyous swellynge, þ the fende our foe

Had vnto man in herte for hys welth
Sent a serpent, and made her for to go
To disceyue Eue, & thus was mans welthe
Byraft hym by the fende in a sleithe
The woman not knowyng of that disceyte
God wote ful ferre was it from her conceyte

Wherfore I say, this good woman Eue
Our father Adam disceyued nought
There may no man for disceyte it preue
Properly, but that she in herte and thought
Had it compassed fyrst or she it wrought
And for suche was not her impressyon
Wen may it call no disceyte of her by reason

Ne no wight disceyueth, but he purpose
The fende this disceyte caste, & nothyng the
Than is it wronge to deme or suppose
That of hys harme the shulde the cause be
wyte the fende, and hys be the maugre
And excused haue her innocence
Saue onely that she brake obedyence

And touchyng this, full fewe men there be
Vnneths any dare I lately say
For to day to day, as men may all day se
But that the beste of god they disobay
Haue this in mynde lyus I you pray
If that ye be discrete and reasonable
Ye will her holde the more excusable

And where men say in man is stedfastnesse
And woman is of her corage vnstable
who may of Adam beare suche a wytnesse
Telleth me this, was he not chaungeable
They bothe weren in o case semblable
Saue wyllyng the fende disceyued Eue
And so dyd she not Adam by your leue

Yet was this synne happy to mankynde
The fende disceyued was for all hys sleyght
For anst he coude hym thus hys sleyghtes wynde
For hys trespace came fro heuen on heyght
God, to discharge man of hys weyght
Fleshe and bloode toke of a virgyne
And suffred dethe, hym to delyuer of pyne

And god, to who there may nothyng hyd be
If he in woman knowen had suche malyce
As men recorde of hem in generalte
Of our lady of lyfe reperatryce
Nolde haue be borne, but that she of vyce
was voyde, and full of vertue well he wyste
Endawed, of her to be borne hym lyste

Her heaped vertue hath suche excellence
That all to leane is mannes faculte
To declare it, and therfore in suspence
Her dewe prayssyng put nedes must be
But thus I say, verely that she
Next god, best frende is that to man longeth
The key of mercy by her gyrdle hongeth

And of mercy hath euery man suche nede
That refyng that farwell the ioy of man
And of her power now taketh fyrst good hede
She mercy may wel, and purchace can
Dispiseth her not, honoureth that woman
And other women all for her sake
And but ye do, your sorowe shall awake

In any boke also where can ye fynde
That of the werkes of dethe or of lyfe
Of Jesu, spelleth or maketh any mynde
That women hym forsoke for wo or stryfe
where was there any wight so ententyfe
About hym as woman, proued none
The apostels hym forsoken euerychone

women forsoke hym not for all the faythe
Of holy churche in woman lefte onely
This is no les for thus holy writte sayth
Loke and ye shall so fynde it hardely
And therfore I may well preue thereby
That in woman reigneth stable constaunce
And in men is the chaunge of varyaunce

Thou precious gemme of martyrs Margarete
That of thy bloode diedest none effusyon
Thou louer trewe, thou mayden in mesure
Thou constaunte woman in thy passyon
Ouercame the fendes temptacion
And many a wight conuerted thy doctryne
Vnto the faythe of holy god thou vyrgyne

But vnderstandeth this, I onely cõmende her
By enchesson of her virgynyte (nought
Trusteth it came neuer in thought
For euer werre I auenst chastyte
And euer shall, but to this meueth me
Her louyng herte, and constaunte to her lay
Dyuse out of remembraunce I ne may

Nowe beldeth this for ferme, and for no lye
That

That this trewe and iuste commendation
Of women tell I for no flatterye
Ne because of pryde or elation
But onely for this entencion
To yeue hem corage of perseuerance
In vertue, and her honour to auaunce

The more vertue, the lasse is the pryde
Vertue so digne is and so noble in kynde
That vyce and he wyll not unfere abyde
He putteth vyces clene out of hys mynde
He flyeth fro hem, he leaueth hem behynde
O woman that of vertue arte hoistreile
Great is thy honour and thy worthynelle

Than wyll I thus conclude and defyne
Yet you commaunde our mynistres echone
That redy ye be our hestes to enclyne
That of these false men our rebel lone
Ye do punishment and that anone
Voyde hem our court, & banyth hem for euer
So that thetin more come they neuer

Fulfylled be it ceasyng all delaye
Lyke there be none excusacion
Wryten in the lusty mouthe of May
In our paleys where many a mullyon
& flouers trewe haue habytacion
The yere of grace ioyfull and iocunde
A thousande foure hundred and seconde.

Explicit.

Thus endeth the letter of Cuppde, and here after folowyth a balade in commendation of oure Lady.



Thousande storyes coude I more reherse
Of olde portes, touchyng thys matere
Howe that Cuppde ỳ herres gan so perce
Of his seruauntes setting hem in fere
Lo here the fyne of therrour and the fere
Lo here of loue the guerdon and greuaunce
That euer with wo her seruauntes do auaunce

Wherfore now plainly I wol my style dresse
Of one to speke, at nede that wyll not fayle
Alas for dole I ne can ne may expresse
Her passyng prise, and that is no meruayle
O wynde of grace, now blow vnto my sayle
O auyate lycour of Cleo for to wete
My penne enspyre of that I wyll endyte

Alas vnworthy I am and vnable
To loue suche one, all women surmountyng
But she be benigne to me and mercyable
That is of pyte the welle and eke the spryng
Wherfore of her in laude and in prayeyng
So as I can supported by her grace
Right thus I fall knelyng tofore her face

O sterre of sterres with thy stremes clere
Sterre of the see, to thy men lyght and gyde
O lusty lyuyng mosse plesaunt to apere
Whose bryght beames ỳ cloudes may not hyde
O way of lyfe to hem that go or ryde
Dawen after tempest tureth vp to ryse
On me haue mercy for thy loues fyne

O rightfull rule o bote of holynesse
And lyghtsome lyne of pyte for to playne
Original begynnyng of grace & al goodnesse
And clenest cofort of vertue most soueraygne
Mother of mercy our trouble to restrayne
Chambre and closet clennest of chastyte
And named herbergh of the deyte

O closed garden all vorde of wedes wycke
Crystalyn welle of clerenesse clere cosigned
Fructyfyed olyue of fayre fayre and thycke
And redolet cedre most dereworthily digned
Remembre on synners that to ỳ be assigned
Let wicked fendes her wrath on hem wreche
Lanterne of lyght thou her lyues leche

Paradyse of pleasaunce, gladsome to all good
Benigne braunchelet of the pyne tre
Vyoarte enuermayled, refresher of our bote
Lycour ayen al langour ꝑ pailed may not be
Blyssfull blomy blosome, bydyng in bounte
Thy mantell of mercy on our mysserie spredе
And er we awake wrappe vs vnder thy wed

O ruby roser, flouryng without spyne
Fountayne al fythielle, as vyrel currant clere
Shoe drop of thy graceful dew to vs propyne
O light without nebule, shining i thy sphere
Wedecyne to mischeues, pucelle whout pere
Flambe downe the dolefull lyght of thyne influence
Remebryng thy seruates for thy magnyfycence

Of al christen protectryce and tutele
Returne of exiled put in the prescription
To hem that erren in the pathes of her sequele
To wery forwandred tent and pauylion
To sayntе and to feelbe the paufaction
Vnto vnitely bothe reft and remedye
Frutefull to all tho that in her allye

To hem that remen thou arte itenerarie
O blyssfull blame to knightes of thy werre
To wery werhmen the is bourne benarie
Wede vnto martyrers that haue sayled ferre
Laureate crowne threnyng as a sterre
To hem that put hem in palastre for thy sake
Cours of her coquest thou white as any lake

O myrthe of martyrs swetter than syrole
Of confessours also rychest donatyfe
Vnto virgynes eternall laurole
Afore all women hauyng prerogatyfe
Mother and mayde, bothe wyfdowe & wyfe
Of all the worlde is none but thou alone
Howe syth thou may be socour to my mone

O trusty turtle trueftaffest of all trewe
O curteyse columbe, replete of all mekenesse
O nyghtyngale with thy notes newe
O popynay pured wyth all clennesse
O laurer ake of loue syngyng with swetnesse
Phebus awaytyng tyll on thy brest he lyght
Vnder thy wynge at domesday vs dyght

O rubye rubifyed in the passyon
Of thy sonne, vs haue amenage in mynde
O stedfast dyametre of duracion
That fe we feres any tyme might thou fynde
For none to him was founde halfe so kynde
O hardy herte, o louyng creature
what was it but loue that made ꝑ so endure

Semely saphyr, depe loupe and blew ewage
Stable as the loupe ewage of pyte
This is to say the freshest of vsage
Thou louest vnchaunged hem that serue the
And yf offence or barreng in hem be
Thou arte aye redy vpon her wo to rewe
And hem receyuest wyth hert full trewe

O goodly gladed whan that Gabriell
With ioye the greete that may not be nubred
In halfe the bysse who coude write or tell
whan the holy goste to the was obumbred
Wherthrough tendes were bytterly encubred
O memielle mayde embelyshed in his bryth
That man and aungel ther of habben myrth

Lo here the blosme and the budde of glorie
Of whiche ꝑ prophete so longe spake before
Lo here the same that was in memorie
Of Plave so longe or the was borne
Lo here of Dauid the delycious corne
Lo here the grounde of lyfe in to bylde
Becomyng man our raunsom for to yelde

O glorious vyole and vyte imyolate
O fyry Tyran perfyng with thy bemes
whose vertuous lustres was it self vyolate
That all ꝑ world embelyshed with ꝑ lemes
Coferuatryce of kynges dukes and realmes
Of Plaves fede swete sumamyte
Perfume my mourning myn own margaryte

O soueraigneft sought out of Syon
Cockle vp golde dewe from abone beraymed
Dewe vnthe vnbrent fyrefesse frut set on
Flabyng with fernere not with hete parmed
Durryng daryse that no wether flayned
Fleece vndefouled of gentyleft Jedeon
And fructifyng fayreft the verde of Aaron

The mighty arche probatyke pifcyne
Laughyng aurore and of peace olyue
Columpne ybafe vp bearyng from abyme
why nere I conuyng here to deferue
Chosen of Joseph whom he toke to wyue
Vnknowyng hym chrisdyng by myracle
And of our manly fygure the tabernacle

I haue

I haue none Englysshe conuenient & dygne
Wyne hertes heale lady the wyth to honour
I wote clerke therfore I wol resygne
Into thyne hande, tyl thou lyst socour
To helpe my makynge both floryshe & flour
Then shulde I shewe in loue how I brende
In songes makynge, thy name to cõmende

For yf I coude before thyne excellence
Syngen in loue I wolde what I sele
And eurr standen lady in thy presence
To shewe in open howe I loue you wele
And syth although your hert be made of stele
To you wythouten any dyscouerraunce
Jay en vous tout ma fiance

where myght I loue euer better beset
Then in thys lyfe lykyng to beholde
The face of loue, the bonde so wel thou knyt
That I mare se the or myne herte colde
And or I passe out of my dayes olde
Cotoze smyrying eurtmore bitterly
Your eyen two wolt slee me sodaynly

For loue I langour blyssed be such sykenesse
Syth it is for you my hertely sufferraunce
I can not els say in my dystresse
But one hath myne hert in gouernaunce
And after that I begynne on esperaunce
With feble entume though it thyne hert perce
Yet for thy sake thys letter I do reherce

God wote on musyke I can not but I gesse
Alas why so that I myght save or synge
So loue I you myne owne souerayne mais
And euer shall wythout departyng
Myrrour of beute, for you out shuld I synge
In remembraunce eke of your eyen clere
Thus serre I to you my souerayne lady dere

So wolde god your loue wolde me so
Syth for your sake I synge day by day
Herte why wylte thou breake a two
Syth wyth my lady dwell I ne may
Thus many a roundel and many a vyrelay
In frenche englysshe when I me layser fynde
I do recorde on you to haue myynde

Nowe lady myne syth I you loue and drede
And you vnchaunged euer fynde in a degre
To gose grace ne may I ne to your womanhede
Dyt sayneth not for to remembre on me
Wyne herte bledeth for I may not yon se
And syth ye wotte my meanyng desyrous
Plures pur moy si vous playst amozous

what marnayle is though I in payne be
I am departed from you my souerayne
Fortune alas, dont vient la destenie
That in no wyse I can ne may attayne
To se the beaute of your eyen twayne
wherfore I say, for trystesse doth me grame
Tant me fait male departyr de ma dame

why nere my wyshyng brouht to such esplort
That I myght say for loue of your presence
Dze a mon cuer ce qui deuillort
Dze a mon cuer, the hyghest excellence
That euer had wight, & syth myne aduertence
Is in you, reweth on my paynes smerte
I am to soze wounded to the herte

To lyue wel merry two louers were there
So may I save wythouten any blame
Vf any man to wylde were
I coude lynke the for to be tame
Lette hym go fore and se where it be game
For I am bryddeb vnto for remedie
For her that is of women chefe pamelle

But euer whe thout my herte shuld enbrace
Then vnto me is best remedy
when I loke on your goodlyhed the face
So mery amyrrour coude I neuer spye
And yf I coude I wolde it magnifye
For neuer none was so fayre vrouthe
Cotoken hem all, and also Violamounde

And fynally wyth mouthe and wyl present
Of doutle eye wythout repentaunce
Myne herte I yeue you lady in thys entent
That ye shall holy therof haue gouernaunce
Takynge my leaue wyth lowtes obeysaunce
(Salue regina synge I daly at al
To be our helpe when we to the cal

All our loue is but ydelnesse
Saue your loue alone who myght therto
who so wol haue a name of gentylnesse
I counsayle hym in loue that he not fayne
Thou swete lady rekure in euery payne
whose mercy moste to me auayleth
To gye by grace, when that fortune fayleth

A balade to kynge Henry the fourth.

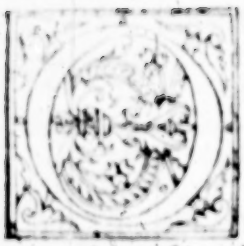
Nought may be tolde wythouten any fable
Your hygh renome, your womanly beaute
Your gouernaunce to al worshyp able
Putteth euery herte in ease in hys degree
O violet, o floure delyce
Syth I am for you so amerous
Estreynes moy de cuer ioyous

with feruēt herte my brest hath brost on fyre
Lardant espoir que mō cuer peynt est mout
Dauoir lamour de celle que ie desyre
I meane you swete moste plesaunt of porte
Et ie say bien que ceo nest pas mon tort
That for you synge, so as I maye for mone
For your bepatronage alone I lyue alone.

Though I myght I woll none other chese
In your seruyce I wolde be founden sadde
Therfore I loue no labour that ye lese
when in longyng forest ye be stadde
Loke vp ye louers and be ryght gladde
Auenst saynt Valentynes daye
For I haue chese that neuer forsake I may.

Explicit.

Johan Gower, vnto the worthy and noble kynge henry the fourth.



Noble worthy kyng Henry the ferthe
In whome the glad fortune is befall
The people to gouerne here vpon erthe
God hath the chosen in comforte of vs all
the worshyp of this lāde which was doun fal
Now stant vpryst thrugh grace of thy good-
which euery man is holde for to bleste (nesse

The hygh god of his iustice alone
The ryght which longeth to thy regalty
Declared hath to stande in thy persone
And more then god may no man iustifye
Thy tytel is knowe vpon thyne auncestrye
The landes folke hath eke thy right affirmed
So stante thy reygne, of god & mā cōfyrmed

There is no man may saye in otherwyse
That god hym selfe ne hath ꝑ ryght declared
wherof the lande is bounde to thy seruyce
which for defaute of helpe hath longe cared
But nowe there is no mannes herte spared
To loue and serue and worche thy plesaunce
And all thys is through goddes purueyaunce

In all thynge which is of god begonne
There folowith grace yf it be wel gouerned
Thus tellen they which olde bokes conne
wherof my lord I wote well thou art lerned
Aske of thy god, so shalt thou not be warned
Of no requeste which is reasonable
For god vnto the good is fauourable

Kyng Salomon whiche had at hys askynge
Of god what thyng him was leuest craue
He chase wysedom vnto gouernynge
Of goddes folke the whiche he wolde saue
And as he chase it fyll him for to haue
For through his wyt while ꝑ his reigne last
He gate him peace and rest in to his last

But Alexander as telleth hys storie
Vnto the god besought in other wey
Of all the worlde to wynne the victorie
So that vnder hys swerde it myght obey
In warre he had al that he wolde prey
The mighty god bebight him that behest
The worlde wanne and had it of conquest

But though it fyll at thylke tyme so
That Alexander his askynge hath atcheued
This synfull worlde was all paynem tho
was none which hath the highe god beleued
No wōder was though thilk world was gre
Though a tyrāt his purpose myst wyn (ued
All was vengeaunce and in fortune of syn

But nowe the faith of Christ is come a place
Among the princes in this erthe here
It sytte hem well to do pyte and grace
But yet it must be tempred in manere
For ꝑ fynden cause in the matere
Vpon the poynt, what afterwarde betyde
The lawe of right shall nat be layde a syde

So may a kynge of warre the borage
Ordayne and take, as he therto is holde
To clayme & aske hys ryghtfull heritage
In all places where it is wyth holde

But elles wyse yf god hym selfe wolde
I affyrme loue and peace betwene the kynges
Peace is the best aboue al erthly thynges

Good is to eschewe warre, and natheles
A kynge may make warre vpon hys ryght
For of batayle the fynall ende is pees
Thus stant the lawe that a worthy knyght
Vpon hys trouth may go to the fyght
But yf so were that he myght chese
Better is the peace of whych may no mã lese

To stere peace ought euerych on lyue
Fyrst for to set hys liege lorde in rest
And eke these other men that they ne stryue
For so thys lande may stande at best
What kynge that wolde be the worthyest
The more he myght our deedly warre cease
The more he shuld his worthynesse encrease

Peace is the chefe of al the worldes welth
And to the heuen it ledeth eke the waye
Peace is of soule and lyfe the mannes helth
Of pestilence and doth the warre awaye
My liege lorde take hede of that I saye
Yf warre may be lefte, take peace on hande
Whych may not be wythout goddes sande

Wyth peace stante euery creature in rest
Wythout peace there may no lyfe be gladde
Aboue all other good peace is the best
Peace hath hym selfe whē warre is al bestad
The peace is sake the warre is euer adrad
Peace is of al ch rite the kay
Whych hath the lyfe and soule for to kay

My liege lorde yf that thy lyst to seche
The seth ensaples what ỹ war hath wrought
Thou shalt wel here of wyse mēnes speche
That deedly warre tourneth into nought
For yf these olde bokes be wel sought
There myght ỹ se what thing ỹ war hath do
Both of conquest and conqueroure also

For bayne honoure, or for the worldes good
They that whylom the stroge warres made
Whether they now bethinke wel in thy mood
The day is gone, the nyght is derke & fade
Our crafte whych made hem then glade
They forowē now, & yet haue nawst ỹ more
The blode is shad, whych no mā may restore

The warre is mother of the wronges all
It lieth the preest in holy church at masse
Forlyth the mayde, & doth her flour to fall
The warre maketh the great cyte lasse
And doth the lawe hys rules ouerpasse
Ther is nothig wherof myschefe may grow
Whych is not caused of the warre I trowe

The warre bringeth in pouerte at hys heles
Wherof the cōmen people is sore greued
The warre hath set his cart on thylk wheles
Where that fortune may not be beleued
For when men were best to haue acheued
Full ofte it is all newe to begyn
The warre hath nothyng syker tho he wyn

For thy my worthy prince in Charles halse
As for aparte whose faith thou hast be gyde
Ley to this olde sore a newe salue
And do the warre away what so betyde
Purchace peace and set it by thy syde
And suffre not thy people be deuoured
So shal thy name euer after shade honoured

Yf any man be nowe or euer was
Ayen the peace thy prouy counsaylour
Let god be of thy counsayle in thys cas
And put away the cruel warryour
For god whych is of man the creatour
He wolde not men slough hys creature
Wythout cause of deedly forlayture

Where nedeth most behoueth most to
My lorde, howe so thy warres be wythou
Of tyme passed who that bethe toke
Good were at home to fe ryght wel about
For euermore the worst is for to doute
But yf thou myghtest partyte peace attayne
There shulde be no cause for to playne

Aboue a kyng good counsayle is to preyse
Aboue al other thynges moste bayable
But yet a kynge wythin hymselfe shal peyse
And sene the thynges that be resonable
And therupon he shall hys wyttes stable
Amonge the men to sette peace in euen
For loue of hym whych is the kyng of heuen

Wel is hym that shedde neuer blode
But yf it were in cause of ryghtwysenesse
For yf a kyng the peryl vnderstode
What is to flee the people, then I gesse

The

A balade to kynge Henry the fourth.

The deedly warres and the heuynesse
wherof peace dystourbed is full ofte
Shulde at some tyme cesse and were softe

O kyng fulfylled of grace and knyghthode
Remembre vpō this poynt for Christes lore
Yf peace be proffered vnto thy manhode
Thyne honour saue, let it not be forsake
Though ꝑ the warres darste wel vndertake
After reason yet temper thy courage
For lyke to peace there is none auauntage

Thy worthy lorde, thynke well how so befall
Of thylke lore, as holy bokes sayne
Christ is the heed, and we be membres all
As well the subiecte as the souerayne
So syt it wel that charite be playne
whych vnto god hym selfe moste accordeth
So as the lore of Christes worde recordeth

In holde lawe of Christ hym selfe was bore
Amonge the x commaundementes I rede
Howe that manslaughter shulde be forbore
Suche was the wyl that tyme of ꝑ godhede
But afterward whe Christ toke hys manhede
Peace was the fyrst thynge he let do crye
Auenst the worldes rancour and enuy

And for Christ went out of thys erth here
And styghed to heuen, he made hys testament
where he bequath to hys dyscyples there
And yaue hys peace, which is the foundemēt
Of charite, wythout whose assent
The worldes peace may neuer wel be tryed
Ne loue kepte, ne lawe iustifyed

Thebrewes wyth ꝑ paynyms hadden werre
But they amōge hem self stode euer in peace
Why shulde then our peace stande out of erre
which christ hath chose to his owne encrese
For Christ is more then was Moyses
And Christ hath set the parfyte of the lawe
The whych shuld in no wyse be wythdrawe

To yeue vs peace was cause why christ dyde
wythout peace may nothynge stande auayled
But nowe a man may se on euery syde
Howe Christes fayth is euery daye assayled
wyth the paynems destroyed & so batayled
That for defaute of helpe and of defence
Vnneth hath Christ hys due reuerence

The ryght fayth to kepe of holy churche
The fyrst poynt is named of knyghthode
And euery man is holde for to wurche
Vpon the poynt that stante to hys manhode
But nowe alas, the fame is spred so brode
That euery man thys thynge complaynneth
And yet is there no mā that helpe ordayneth

The worldes cause is wayted ouer all
There be the warres redy to the full
But Christes owne cause in speciall
There ben the swerdes and the speres dull
And wyth the sentence of the popes bul
As for to done the folke payne obey
The churche is turned all another wey

It is wonder aboue any manners wyt
Whout warre howe Christes fayth was won
And we that be vpon thys erth yet
Ne kepe it not as it was fyrst begon
To euery creature vnder the sonne
Christ badde hym selfe that we shulde preche
And to the folke hys Euangely teche

Nowe lyght it is to kepe them to make
But that we founden made to fore honde
we kepe not, but lette it lyghtly slake
The peace of christ hath all to broke hys bonde
we fell out selfe, and fastneen euery londe
To slee eche other, as thyng vndefended
So stant the warre, & peace is not amended

But though the heed of holy church aboue
Ne do not al hys hole busynesse
Amonge the people to set peace and loue
These kynges oughten of her rightwysnesse
Her owne cause amonge hem selfe redresse
The Peters shyp as now hath lost hys stere
It lyeth in hem the barge for to stere

Yf holy churche after the dewte
Of Christes worde ne be not all auysed
To make peace, accorde, and bote
Amonge the kynges that be nowe dewysed
yet natheles the lawe stante assysed
Of manners wytte to be so resonable
wythout that to stande hym selfe stable

Of holy church we ben chyldren all
And euery chylde is holde for to bowe
Vnto the mother, howe that euer it fall
Or els he muste reason dysalowe

And

And for that cause a knyght shal first awowe
The ryght of holy church to defende
That no man shal the preuylege offende

Thus were it good to sette al in euen
The worldes princes, and the prelates both
For loue of hym which is the kynge of heuen
And yf men shuld algate waren wrothe
The Sarazins, whych vnto Christ ben loth
Let men be armed ayenst hem to fyghte
So may the knyght hys dede of armes right

Upó this poinctes stat Christes peace oppres
Fyrst holy church in her selfe deuyded (sed
Which ought of reason fyrst to be redressed
But yet so hygh a cause is not desyded
And thus when humble pacience is prayded
The remnaunt whych that they shulde rule
No wonder is though it stande out of rule

Of that the heed is sick the lymmes aken
These reignes that to Christes peace belonge
For worldes good these deedly warres make
whych helpelesse as in balaunce hongen
The heed aboue hem hath not vnderfongen
To sette peace but euery man sleeth other
And in thys wyse hath charite no brother

The two defautes bryngen in the thryde
Of myscreauntes that sene howe we debate
Betwene the two they fallen in amydde
where nowe al dare they fynde an open gate
Lo thus the deedly werre stante algate
But euer I hope of kynge Henries grace
That he it is, whych shal the peace embrace

My worthy noble prynce and kynge anoynt
whome god hath of hys grace so preserued
Beholde and se the worlde vpon this poynt
As for thy part that Christes peace be serued
So shal thy hygh mede be deserued
To hym whych all shall quyte at laste
For thys lyfe here may no whyle laste

Se Alexander Hector and Julius
Se Machabeus, Dauid, and Josue
Se Charlemayne, Godfray, and Arthus
Fulfylled of warre and of mortalite
Her fame abyde, but all is but vanite
For deth, whych hath the warres vnder fote
Hath made an ende, of whych ther is no bote

So many a mā the soth wete and knowe
That peace is good for euery kynge to haue
The fortune of the warre is euer vnknowe
But where peace is, ther is the marches saue
That nowe is vp, to morow is vnder graue
The myghtye god hath all grace in hande
wythout hym men may not longe stande

Of the tennes to wynne or lese a chace
May no lyfe were or that the bal be ronne
Al stant in god what thyng me shal purchace
Thende is in hym or that it be begonne
Men sayne the wolle when it is well sponne
Doth that the cloth is stronge & profytable
And els it maye neuer be durable

The worldes chaunces vpon aunture
Ben euer sette, but thylke chaunce of pees
Is so behouely to the creature
That is aboue al other peerles
But it may not beget natheles
Amonge the men to laste any whyle
But where the herte is playne without

The peace is as it were a sacrament
Tofore the god a thall wyth wordes playne
wythout any double entendement
Be treated for the trouth can not layne
But yf the men wythin hem selfe ben vayne
The substaunce of the peace may not be
But euery day it chaungeth vpon newe

But who that is of charite parfyte
He voydeth al sleyghtes fer aboue
And sette hys worde vpon the same plyte
where that his hert hath founde al loue
And thus when conscience is trewly
And that these ben handled wyth the
Ye shall abyde, and stande in all wyse

The Apostle sayth, ther may no lyfe be good
whych is not grounded vpon charite
For charite ne shedde neuer blood
So hath the warre as there no properte
For thylke vertue whych is sayd pyte
wyth charite so ferforth is acquaynted
That in her may no falle semblant be paynted

Cassodore, whose wrytynge is authorised
Sayth, where that pyte reygneth is grace
Thrugh whych ꝑ peace hath al his welth al
So ꝑ of warre he dredeth no manace (fyld
where

where pyte dwelleth in the same place
There maye no deedly cruelte sojourne
wherof that mercy shulde hys way tourne

To se what pyte forth wyth mercy doth
The cronique is at Rome in thylke empyre
Of Constantyne, whych is a tale sothe
when hym was lyuer hys owne deth desyre
Then do the yonge chyldren to martyre
Of crueltie he lefte the quarele
Pyte he wrought, and pyte was hys hele

For thylke mannes pyte whych he dede
God was pytous, and made hym hole at all
Sylvester came, and in the same stede
Vaue hym baptyme fyrst in special
whych dyd awaye the fyrme original
And all hys lepre it hath so purified
That hys pyte for euer is magnified

Pyte was cause why thys Emperour
was hole in body and in soule bothe
And Rome also was sette in thylke honour
Of Christes fayth, so that the lewe of leth
whych habben be wyth Christ tofore wroth
Reconsiled were vnto Christes lore
Thus shall pyte be praysed euermore

Myn worthy liege lorde Henry by name
whych Englande hast to gouerne & ryght
Men ought well thy pyte to proclame
whych enlumyne in all the worldes syght
As shewed, wyth the helpe of god almyght
To vene vs peace which leg hath be debated
Wherof thy pryse shal neuer be abated

My lorde, in whom hath euer yet be founde
Pyte, wythout spotte of violence
Kepe thylke peace alwaye wythin bounde
whych god hath planted in thy conscience
So shall the cronyque of thy pacience
Amonge the sayntes be taken into memorye
To the legende of perdurable glorye

And to thyne eet help pryse, so as I can
whych euery man is holde to comende
I Gower, whych am all thy liege man
Thys letter vnto thyne excellence I sende
As I whych euer vnto my lyues ende
woll pray for the state of thy persone
In worshyppe of thy sceptre and thy throne

Not onely to my kynge of peace I write
But to these other prynces chasten all
That eche of hem hys owne herte endyte
And sese the warre or more myschefe fall
Sette eke the tyrannical pryde vpon hys stall
Kepe charite, and drawe pyte to hande
Vaunteyn lawe, and so the peace shal stande

Explicit carmē de pacis cōmendatione quod ad laudem et memoriā serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici Quarti, suus humilis orator Johannes Gower composuit.

Electus Christi, pie ter Henrice fuisti
Qui bene venisti, cum propria regna petisti
Tu mala dirisisti bonus bona restituisti
Et populo tristi noua gaudia contribuisti
Est mihi spes lata, qd adhuc per te renouata
Succedent fata, detri probitate beata
Est tibi nam grata, q̄ acta sponte data

Henrici quarti, pii, regis regni tui anno
Quo mihi defecit visus ad acta mea
Qua tēpus habent finem natura manifestat
Quem virtute sua frangere nemo potest
Vltra posse mihi quātus mihi velle remansit
Implius vt scribam non mihi posse manet
Nu potui scripsi, sed me quia cursus senectus
Turbant sensus scripta relinquo scolis
Scribat qui veniet post me discretior alter
Quomodo namq; manus et mea penna silent
Hoc tamen in fine verborum queso meorum
Prospera quod flatuat regna futura deus.

Explicit.

Of the Cuckow & the nightyngale.



The god of loue, ah benedicite
How myghty and howe great a lorde is he
For he can make of lowe hertes hye
And of hye lowe, & lyke for to dye
And harde hertes he can maken free

He can make within a lyte stounde
A wyght man lyke wode, fresh and sounde
And of wode he can make seke
He can bynde and vnbynden eke
That he wol haue bounden or vnbounde

To tel his myght my wyt may not suffyse
For he can make of wyse folke full nyce
For he may do al that he wol deuyce
And lythy folke to destroyen vyce
And proude hertes he can make agryse

Shortly all that euer he wol he may
Agaynst hym dare no wyght say nay
For he can glad & greue whom hym lyketh
And who that he wol he lowseth or lyketh
And most his might he sheweth euer in may

For euery true gentle hert free
That wyth hym is or thynketh for to be
Agayne May now shal haue some sterynge
Or to loye or els to some mournyng
In no season, so moche as thynketh me

For whan they may here the brydes synge
And se the floures and the leues spryngе
That bryngeth into her remembraunce
A manere ease medled with greuaunce
And lusty thoughtes full of great longyng

And of that longyng cometh heuynesse
And therof groweth oft great sycknesse
And for lacke of that that they desyre
And thus in May ben hertes set on fyre
So that they brennen forth in gret distresse

I speke thys of felyng trewly
Al be I olde and vnlusty
Yet I haue felt of the sicknes through May
Both hote and colde, and ares euery day
How sore ywys there wote no wight but I

I am so shaken with the feuers whyte
Of al thys May slepe I but a lyte
And also it is not lyke to me
That any hert shulde slepy be
In whom that loue his fury dart, wol smyte

But as I laye thys other nyght waking
I thought how louers had a tokenyng
And amonge hem it was a comune tale
That it were good to here the nyghtyngale
Rather than the leude cocke we lyng

And than I thought anone as it was daye
I wolde go somwhere to asay
If that I myght a nyghtyngale here
For yet had I none herde of al that yere
And it was tho the thyrde nyght of May

And anone as I the day aspyde
No lenger wolde I in my bedde abyde
But into a woode that was fast by
I went forth alone boldely
And helde the way downe by a broke syde

Tyl I came to a launde of whyte and grene
So fayre one had I neuer in bene
The ground was grene, ypoudred wyth daysye
The floures and the greues lyke hye
Al grene and whyte, was nothyng els seue

There sate I downe among the fayre floures
And saw the brydes trippe out of her bowres
There as they rested hem al the nyght
They were so ioyful of the dayes lyght
They began of May for to done honres

They coude that seruice al by rote
There was many a louely note
Some lange loude as they had playned
Some in other manere voice vplayned
And some al out wyth the ful throte

They proyned hem, & made hem tyght gay
And daunseden and lepten on the spray
And euermore two and two in fere
Ryght so as they had chosen hem to yere

Of the cuckowe and the nyghtyngale.

In Feuerere vpon sayncte Valentynes daye
And the ryuer that I sat vpon
It made suche a noyse as it ron
Accordaunt with the brydes armony
Me thought it was the best melody
That myght ben yherde of any mon

And for delyte I wot neuer how
I fel in suche a slombre and a swowe
Nat all asleepe ne fully waking
And in ꝑ swowe me thought I herde synge
The sory bryde the lewde cuckowe

And that was on a tree ryght fast by
But who was than ryal apayde but I
Now good ꝙ I that bred on the crows
Peue sorowe on the and on thy lewde vows
Full lytle loye haue I now of thy crye

And as I vp the cuckowe thus gan chyde
I herde in the nexte bush beside
A nyghtyngale so lustely synge
That with her clere voyce she made ryng
Throughout all the grene wood wyde

Ah good nyghtyngale ꝙ I then
A lytle hast thou ben to longe hen
For here hath ben the lewde cuckowe
And songen songes rather than hast thou
I pray to god euyll fyre her bren

But now I wol you tel a wondre thyng
As longe as I laye in that swowenyng
Me thought I wyst what the brydes ment
And what they sayd, ye what was her entēt
And of her speche I had good knowynge

There herde I the nyghtyngale say
Now good cuckowe go some where away
And let us that can synge dwellen here
For euery wyght esteuneth the to here
Thy songes be to elenge in good fay

what ꝙ he what may the ayden nowe
It thynketh me, I synge as wel as thou
For my songe is both true and playne
And though I can not crake so in vayne
As thou dost in thy throte, I wot neuer (howe
And euery wyght may vnderstand me
But nyghtyngale so may they not done the
For thou hast many a nyce queynt crye
I haue the herde sayne, ocy ocy
How might I knowe what that shulde be

Ah foole ꝙ she wost thou not what it is
whan that I say, ocy ocy ywys
Than meane I that I wolde wondre fayne
That all they were shamefully yslayne
That meanen ought agayne loue amys

And also I wolde that al tho had the dede
That thynke not in loue her lyfe to lede
For who so ꝑ woll not the god of loue serue
I dare wel say he is worthy to sterue
And for that cayll, ocy ocy I grede

Eye ꝙ the cuckowe this is a queynt lawe
That euery wight shal loue or be to drawe
But I forsake al suche company
For myne entent is not for to dye
Ne neuer whyle I lyue on loues yoke to (drawe
For louers ben the folke that ben on lyue
That moost dispayre haue, moost anoyous
And most endure sorowe, wo and care
And left felen of welfare
what nedeth it ayenst trouth to stryue

what ꝙ she thou art out of thy mynde
How myght thou in thy thral castle tynde
To speke of loues seruauntes in this wyse
For in this worlde is none so good seruyce
To euery wyght that gentil is of kynde

For therof truly cōmeth all goodnesse
All honour and al gentilesse
worshyp, ease, and al hertes lust
Parfyte ioye, and ful assured trust
Iolyte, pleasaunce and frendlynesse

Lowlyhed, largesse, and curtesye
Semelyhed, and the we company
Dede of shame for to done anoys
For he that truly loues seruaunt is
were lother be shamed than to dye

And that this is soth that I sey
In that beleue I wyll lyue and dey
And cuckow so I rede that thou do ywys
Than ꝙ he let me neuer haue blysse
yf euer I vnto that counsayle obey

Nyghtyngale

Nyghtyngale thou spekest wondre fayre
But for al that is the soth contrayre
For loue is in yonge folke but rage
And in olde folke a great dotage
who most it vseth most shal enpayre

For therof cómeth disease and heuynesse
So sorowe & care & many a great sykenesse
Despyte, debate, angre and enuy
Depravyng, shame, untrust and ielousye
Pryde, mischefe, pouertie & wodnesse

Louyng is an offyce of dispayre
And one thyng is therin that is not fayre
For who that getteth of loue a lytle blysse
But yf he be alway therwith ywys
He may ful sone of age haue his heyre

And nyghtyngale therfore holde the nye
For leue me wel for al thy quyrnt crye
yf thou be farre or longe fro thy make
Thou shalt be as other that ben forsake
And than thou shalt boren as do I

Pre q she on thy name and on the
The god of loue ne let the neuer ythe
For ꝑ art worse a thousandfolde than wood
For many one is ful worthy and ful good
That had he nought ne had loue vbe

For euermore loue his seruauntes auẽdeth
And from all vyl taches hem defendeth
And maketh hem to ben vyght in a fyre
In trouth and in worthyful desyre
And whã hem lyketh, love ynough hem sendeth

Thou nyghtyngale he sayd be stil
For loue hath no reason, but it is wyll
For oft tyme untrue folke he easeth
And trewe folke so vnkyndly he displeaseth
That for default of corage he let hym spyll

Than toke I of the nyghtingale kepe
Pe whe cast a sygh out of her depe
And sayd, alas that euer I was bore
I can for tene not say one worde more
And vyght with that worde she braste out to wepe

Alas q she my hert wyll to breke
To heren thus this lewde bryde speke
Of loue, and of his worshypful seruyce
Now god of loue thou helpe me in some wise
That I may on this cuckowe ben awreke

We thought than he sterte vp anon
And glad was I that he was agon
And euermore the cuckowe as he flaye
Sayd, farewel farewel popyngaye
As though he had scorned me alone

And than came the nyghtyngale to me
And sayd, frende forsoth I thanke the
That thou hast lyked me to rescowe
And one auowe to loue make I nowe
That all this May I woll thy synger be

I thanked her, and was vyght well apayde
Pe q she and be thou not dismayde
Tho thou haue herde ꝑ cukowe crye than I
For yf I lyue it shal amended be
The nexte May, yf I be not alrayde

And one thyng I wyll rede the also
Ne leue thou not the cukowe ne his lowe
For all that he hath sayd is straunge lesyng
May q I therto shal nothyng me brynge
For loue, and it hath do me moche wo

Pe vse q she this medicyne
Euery day this May or thou dyne
Go loke vpon the fresh daysye
And though thou be for wo in poynt to dye
That shal full greatly lessen the of thy payne

And loke alwaye that thou be good & trewe
And I woll synge one of the songes newe
For loue of the, as loude as I maye crye
And than she began this songe full hye
I shrewe all hem that ben of loue untrewe

And whan she had songe it to the ende
Now farewel q she for I mote wende
And god of loue, ỽ can vyght wel and maye
As moche love sende the this day
As any yet louer he euer sende

Thus taketh ꝑ nyghtingale her leaue of me
I praye to god alwaye with her be
And loye of loue he sende her euermore
And shylde vs fro the cuckowe and his lore
For there is not so false a bryde as he

For the she sle we the gentle nyghtyngale
To all the brydes in that were that date

And gate hem all into a place in fere
And beſoughten hem that they wold here
Her diſeaſe, and thus began her tale

The cuckowe, well it is not for to hyde
How the cuckowe and I fall haue chyde
Euer ſythen it was day lyght
I praye you al that ye do me ryght
Of that foule falſe vnkynde bryde

Than ſpake o bryde, for al by one aſſent
This mater aſketh good auyſement
For we ben brydes here in fere
And ſoth it is, the cuckowe is not here
And therfore we wol haue a parlyment

And there at ſhal the egle be our lorde
And other peres that ben of recorde
And the cuckowe ſhalbe after ſent
There ſhalbe yeue the iugement
Or els we ſhal fynally make accorde

And this ſhalbe without nay
The morow after ſaynt Valentynes day
Vnder a maple that is fayre and grene
Before the chambre wyndowe of the quene
At wodlocke vpon the grene laye

She thanked hem and than her leaue toke
And vnto an hauthorne by that broke
And there the fat and longe vpon that tree
Cryme of lyfe loue hath withholde me
So longe that I with that ſonge awoke

Explicit.

O Lewde booke wyth thy foule rudeneſſe
Syth thou haſt neither beautie ne eloquence
who hath the, cauſed or yeue the hardyneſſe
For to appeare in my ladyes preſence
I am ful ſyker thou knoweſt her benevolence
Ful agreable to al her obeyſing
For of all good ſhe is the beſt lyuyng

Alas that thou ne haddeſt worthyneſſe
To ſhewe to her ſome pleaſaunt ſentence
Syth that ſhe hath through her gentyleſſe
Accepted for ſeruaut to her digne reuerence
O me repenteth that I ne had ſcience
And leyſer als to make the more flouſhinge
For of al good ſhe is the beſt lyuyng

Beſeche her meekly with all lowlyneſſe
Though I be fere from her in abſence
To thinke on my trouth to her ſtedfaſtnes
And to abreye of my ſorowes the violence
Which cauſed is, wherof knoweth your ſapyence
The lyke amōg to notify me her lykinge eke
For of all good ſhe is the beſt lyuyng

Lenuoye.

Atrote of gladneſſe and daye of luſtyneſſe
Lucerne, a nyght with heuenly influence
Illumined rote of beutie and goodneſſe
Suſpyres which I reſounde in ſylence
Of grace I beſeche alegge let your wrytyng
Now of all good, ſyth ye be beſt lyuynge.

Explicit.

Scogan vnto the lordes and gentlemen of the kynges house.



Y noble sonnes, and eke my lordes dere
I your father, called vnworthely
Sende vnto you this lytell treatyse here
wrytten with myne owne hande full rudely
Although it be that I not reuerently
Haue wrytten to your estates, I you pray
Myne vncomyng taketh benignely
For gods sake, and herken what I say

I cõplayne me sore whan I remembre me
The sodayne age that is vpon me fall
But more I cõplayne my mispent tyme vtterly
The which is impossyble ayen for to call
But certaynly the most cõplaynt of all
Is to thynke that I haue be so nyce
That I ne wolde vertues to me call
In al my youth but vyces aye chervce.

Of which I aske mercy of the lorde
That art almyghty god in maiestie
Beseching to make so euen accorde
Betwyxe the and my soule that vanitie
worldly lust, ne blynde prosperitie
Haue no lordshyp ouer my flesh to frele
Thou lorde of rest and parfyte vnitie
Put fro me vyce, and kepe my soule hele

And yeue me myght whyle I haue lyfe and space
Me to cõforme fully to thy pleasaunce
Shewe to me aboundaunce of thy grace
and in good werkes graut me perseueraunce
Of all my youth forget the ignoraunce
Yeue me good wyl to serue & aye to queme
Set all my lyfe after thyne ordinaunce
And able me to mercy or thou deme

My lordes dere, why I this cõplaint wryte
To you whom I loue moost entierely
Is for to warne you, as I can endyte
That tyme lost in youth folyly
Greueth a wyght bodily and ghostly
I meane hem that to luste & vyce entende
wherfore lordes I praye you specially
Your youth in vertue shapeth to dyspende

Plante the rote of youthe in such a wyse
That in vertue your growynge be alway
Loke alwaye goodnesse be in your exercyse
That shall you myghty make at eche assay
The fende to withstande at eche affray
Passeth wysely thys perylious pylgrymage
Thynke on thys worde, & werke it euery day
That shall you yeue a parfyte floured age

Taketh also hede howe ỳ these noble clerkes
wrytten in her bokes of great sapience
Sayeng ỳ fayth is deed wythouten werkes
And eyght so is estate wyth negligence
Of vertue, and therfore wyth diligence
Shapeth of vertue so to plante the rote
That ye therof haue full experience
To worshyp of your lyfe and soules bote

Taketh also hede that lordshyp ne estate
wythout vertue may not longe endure
Thynketh eke howe vyces & vertue at debate
Haue ben & shall whyle the worlde may dure
And euer the vycious by auenture
Is ouerthrowe, and thynketh eu'more
That god is lorde of al vertue, and vycyous
Of all goodnesse, & therfore folowe his lore

My mayster Chaucer, god hys soule sane
That in hys language was so curious
He sayd that ỳ father whych is deed & grane
Byqueth nothynge hys vertue vn to his house
Vnto hys chyldren, and therfore laborouse
Ought ye be beseching god of grace
To yeue you myght for to be vertuous
Through whych ye myght haue parte of his place

Here may se that vertuous nobleſſe
Cometh not to you by way of auncestrye
But it cometh by lefful besynesse
Of honest lyfe, and not by slogardye
wherfore in youth I rede you ye endyve
The house of vertue in suche a maniere
That in your age may you kepe and gyve
Fro the tempest of worldes wawes here

Thynketh how vertue and estate
There is a parfyte blessed marriage
Vertue is cause of peace, vyce of debate

¶ Am. In

In many stocke the which be full of corage
Cherysheth chan vertue, vyces to outrage
Detecth he fyry, let hem haue no wōning
In your soules leseth not the heritage
which god hath yeue to vertuous kuyng.

Taketh hede also, how men of poze degree
Through vertue haue be set ingreat honour
And euer haue kued in great prosperitie
Through cherysshyng of vertuous labour
Thynketh also how many a gouernour
Called to estate, hath be set full lowe
Through mysdyng of ryght, and of errour
And therfore I counsel you vertue to knowe

thus by your auncestres ye may nothig claim
As ꝑ my master Chaucer sayth expresse
But tẽporal thig, ꝑ men may hurt oz mayme
Than is god stocke of vertues nobilesse
And syth that he is lorde of blysfulnesse
And made vs al, and for vs all deyde
Folowyth hym in vertue with full besynesse
And of this thing herk how my master seyd

The fyrst stocke, father of gentylnesse
What man that clayme th gentle for to be.
Must folow his trace, & al his wyttes dres
Vertue to loke, and vyces for to flye
For vnto vertue longeth dignitie
And nat the reuers, saufly dare I deme
All weare he mytre, crowne oz dyademe

The fyrst stocke was full of ryghtwysnesse
True of his worde, sobre pytous and free
Clene of his ghost, and loued besynesse
Ayenst the vyce of slouth in honestie
And but his heyre loue vertue as dyd he
He is not gentle though he ryche seme
Al weare he mytre, crowne oz dyademe

Vyce may be an heyre to olde rychesse
But there may no man, al men may se
Bequeth his heyre his vertuous nobilesse
That is appropried vnto no degree
But to the fyrst father in maieste
That maketh his heyres hem ꝑ cā bi queme
Al weare he mytre, crowne oz dyademe

Lo here this noble poete of Bretayne
How lyghtly in vertuous sentence
The losse on youth of vertue can cōplayne
And therfore I pray you with your diligēce
For your profyte and gods reuerence
Tempereth fully vertue in your mynde
That whā ye come to your inges presence
Ye be not vertueles than behynde.

Many lordes haue a maner now adayes
Though one shewe hem a vertuous matere
Her feruent youth is of so false alayes
That of that arte they haue no ioy to here
But as a shyp that is without a stere
Dryueth vp & downe without gouernaūce
Wenyng that calme wolde laste yere by yere
Ryght so fare they for very ygnoraunce.

For very shame knowe they not by reason
ꝑ after an ebbe there cōmeth a floud ful rage
In ꝑ same wyse whā youth passeth his seso
Cōmeth croked and vnweldy palled age
And sone after cōmeu ꝑ kalendes of dotage
And if ꝑ her youth haue no vertue prouided
All men wol say, fye on her vassalage
Thus hath her slouth fro worshyp hem de-
uyded

Boetius the clerke, as men may rede and se
Sayth in his boke of Consolation
what man desyreth of dyne oz tree
Plentyous fruit in crapping season
Must euer eschue to do oppressyon
Vnto the rote whyle it is yonge and grene
Thus may ye se wel by that inclusyon
That youth vertueles doth moche tene

Now seeth there ayenst how vertuous no-
Roted in youth th good perseuerance bicle
Dryueth away al vyces and wretchednesse
As slogardye, ryote, and dissaunce
Seeth eke how vertue causeth suffisaunce
Seeth eke how vertue vordeth al vyle
And who so hath vertu hath al abūdaunce
Of wele, as ferre as reason can deuyse

Taketh hede of Tullius Hostylius
That fro powerte came to hygh degree
Through vertue, redeth eke of Julius
The conquerour, how poore a man was he
Yet through his vertue and his humilitie
Of many countrie had be gouernaunce
Thus vertue bringeth a man to great degree
Eche wyght that lust to do him entēdaunce

Rede here ayenst now of Nero vertueles
Taketh hede also of proude Baithasare

They

They hated vertue, equyte and pees
And lobe hawe Antyochus fyl fro his chare
That he his skyn and bones al to tare
Lobe what mischaūce they had for her vices
Who so wol not by these signes beware
I dare wel say unfortunate and nyce is

I can no more nowe say, but herby may ye se
Howe vertue causeth perfyte sykernesse
And vices exilen al prosperite
The best is echo man to chose as I gesse
Doth as you lyst, I my excuse expresse
I wolde be tryght sory yf that ye mischese
God confirme you in vertuous nobilesse
So that through negligence ye not it lese.

¶ Explicit.

Sentryne the worlde so stedfast
was and stable
That mannes worde was an obligation
And nowe it is so false and discevuable
That worde and dede as in conclusion
Is nothyng lyke, for turned is by so downe
Al the worlde, through mede and tykelnesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse

What maketh the worlde to be so variable
But lust that men have in dyscrecion
For amonge vs a man is holde unable
But yf he can by some collusion
Do his neighbour wronge and oppression
What causeth this but wylful wretchednesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse

Trouth is put downe, reason is holde fable
Vertue hath nowe no dominacion
Pite is exiled, no man is mercyable
Through couetyse is blente discrecion
The worlde hath made a permutacion
Fro ryght to wrong, fro trouth to sykernesse
That al is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

¶ Lenuoye.

Prince desyre to be honourable
Cherysh thy folke, and hate extorcion
Suffre nothyng that may be reprouable
To thyne estate done in thy region
Shewe forth the verde of castigacion
Drede god, do law, loue trouth & worthines
And wedde thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

¶ Explicit.

¶ Good counsayle of Chaucer.

Lye ye fro the preasse & dwell
with sothfastnesse
Suffice unto thy good yf it
be smal
For horde hath hate, & clymbynge tykelnesse
Preasse hath enuye, and wele is blent over al
Savour no more than the behoue shall
Rede wel thy selfe that other folke shal rede
And trouth the shal delyuer it is no drede

Payne the not eche croked to redresse
In trust of her that turneth as a balle
Grete rest stondeth in lytle besynesse
Beware also to spurne agayne a nalle
Stryue not as doth a crocke with a walle
Deme thy selfe that demest others dede
And trouth the shal delyuer it is no drede

That the is sent receyue in buxomnesse
The wrastlyng of this worlde asketh a fal
Here is no home, here is but wyldernesse
Forth pylgrym, forth best out of thy stal
Loke upon heygh and thanke god of al
Weyue thy lust and let thy gost the lede
And trouth the shal delyuer it is no drede

¶ Explicit.

¶ Balade of the vyllage without payntynge.

¶ Playntyfe to fortune.

This wretched worldes transmutacion
As wele & wo now pore and nowe honour
Without order or dew discrecion
Governed is by fortunes errour
But nathlesse the lacke of her favour
Me may not do me synge though that I dye
Jay tout pardu mon temps et labour
For finally fortune I defye.

Yet is me lefte the syght of my reasoun
To knowe frende fro foe in thy myrrour
So much hath yet thy turnynge vp & doun
I taught me to knowen in an hour
But trewly no force of thy reddour

To hym that ouer hym selfe hath maystry
My sufficiaunce shalbe my socour
For finally fortune I defye

O Socrates thou stedfast champion
Whe myght neuer be thy turmentour
Thou neuer dreddest her oppression
Ne in her chere founde thou no fauour
Thou knewe the disceyte of her colour
And that her moost worshyp is for to lye
I knowe her eke a false dissimulour
For finally fortune I defye

¶ The answere of fortune.

No man is wretched but hym selfe it weme
He that hath hym selfe hath sufficiaunce
why sayst thou than I am so to the kene
That hast thy selfe out of my gouernaunce
say thus, graunt mercy of thyne abundaunce
That thou hast lent or this, I shall not stryue
what wost ꝑ yet howe I wyl the auaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende on lyue

I haue the taught diuision betweme
frende of effecte, and frende of countenaunce
The nedeth nat the galle of an hyne
That cureth eyen decke for her penaunce
Howe serst thou eiete ꝑ were in ignoraunce
Yet holt thyne anker, yet thou maist atriue
there bounte bereth the key of my substaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende alyue

Howe many haue I refused to sustene
Syth I haue the fostred in thy pleasaunce
wolt thou than make a statute on thy quene
That I shalbe aye at thyne ordynaunce
Thou borne arte in my regne of varyaunce
Aboute ꝑ whele with other must thou dryue
My lore is bette, tha which is thy greuaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a lyue

¶ The answere to fortune.

Thy lore I dampne it is aduersite
My frende mayst ꝑ not reue blynd goddesse
That I thy frendes knowe I thanke it the
Take hem agayne let hem go lye a presse
The nygardes in kepyng her ryches
Pronoliyke is thou wolt her toure assayle
wicke appetyte cometh aye before sycknesse
In general thys rule may not fayle

¶ Fortune.

Thou pynchest at my mutabilyte
For I the lent a droppe of my ryches
And nowe me lyketh to withdrawe me
why shuldest thou my royalte oppresse
The see may ebbe and flowe more and lesse
The welke hath myster to shyne, rayne & hayle
Ryght so must I kyth my dyuersitee
In general thys rule may not fayle

¶ The playntyfe.

Lo, the execution of the maieste
That al purueyeth of hys ryght wyfulnesse
That same thyng fortune clepen ye
ye blynde beestes ful of lewdnesse
The heuen hath propertie of sykernesse
Thys worlde hath euer restlesse trauayle
The laste day is ende of myne extresse
In general thys rule may not fayle

¶ Themoye of fortune.

Princes I pray you of your gentylnesse
Let not thys man on me thus crye & playne
And I shal quyte you thys doutlesse
And yf ye lyst releue hym of hys payne
Pray ye hys best frende of his nobilesse
That to some better estate he maye attayne

¶ Lenuoye.



O broken ben the statutes hye in heuen
That creatē were eternally endure
Syth ꝑ I se the bryght goddes seuen
Nowe wepe and wayle and passion endure
As mayde in earth a mortal creature
Alas, fro whence may thys thynge procede
Of which errour I dye almost for drede

By worde eterne whilom was it shape
That fro the fyfth cercle in no manere
Ne myght of teares downe escape
But nowe so weepeth Venus in her sphere
that with her teares she wol drenche vs here
Alas Skogan thys is for thyne offence
Thou causest thys deluge of pestilence

Hast ꝑ not sayd in blasphemie of the goddis
through pride, or through thy grete rekelnesse
such thinges as in ꝑ lawe of loue forbode is
That for thy lady sawe not thy distresse
Therfore thou haue her vp at thy gladnesse
Alas Skogon of olde folke ne longe
was neuer erst Skogā blamed for his tong

Thou

Thou drewe in stronge Cupide eke to recorde
Of thilke rebel worde that thou hast spoken
For which he wol no lenger be thy lorde
And Skogan though hys bowe be not broke
He wol not wyth his arowes ben ywroken
On the ne me, ne none of our figure
We shal of him haue neyther hurte ne cure

Now certes frend I drede of thine vnhappe
Lest for thy gylt the wretche of loue procede
On al hem ꝑ bene hore and rounde of shappe
That bene so lykely folke to spede
Than we shal for our labour haue our mede
But wel I wotte thou wolte answere & say
Lo olde grysel lyst to renne and play

Nay Skogan say not so, for I me excuse
God helpe me so, in no ryme doutles
Me thynke I neuer of slepe wake my muse
That rusteth in my sheth syth in pees
whyle I was yong I put her forth in prees
But al shal passe that men prose or ryme
Take euery man his tourne as for his tyme

Skogan thou kneleſt at the stremes heed
Of grace, of al honour, and of worthynesse
In thende of wynter am but as deed
Forgeten in solatary wyldernesse
Yet Skogan thinke on Tullius kyndenesse
Wynde thy sayle there it may fructify
Farewel, & lyke thou neuer ete loue drye

Explicit.



O forthe kynge, rule the by sapience
Bythoppe be able to mynistre doctrine
Lorde to trewe counsayle yeue audience
womanheade to chastyte euer enclyne
Knyght let thy dedes worshyp determyne
Be ryghtous iuge in sauyng thy name
Eyth do almesse, lest thou lese bysshe & shame

People obey your kyng and the lawe
Age be thou ruled by good reuguon
Trew seruaut be dredeful & kepe ꝑ vnder awe
And thou poore fye on presumption
Inobedience to youth is bytter destruction
Remembre you howe god hath set you lo
And do your parte as ye be ordayned to.

Chaucer vnto hys empty purse.

To you my purse and to none other wight
Complayne I, for ye be my lady dere
I am sory nowe that ye be lyght
For certes ye nowe make me heuy chere
Me were as lefe be layde vpon a bere
For which vnto your mercy thus I crye
Be heuy agayne or els mote I dye

Nowe vouchsafe thys daye or it be nyght
That I of you the blysful sowne may here
Or se your colour lyke the sunne bryght
That of reclownesse had neuer pere
Ye be my lyfe, ye be my hertes stere
Quene of comforte and of good company
Be heuy agayne, or els mote I dye

Nowe purse that arte to me my lyues lyght
And sauour, as downe in thys worlde here
Out of thys towne helpe me by your myght
Syth that ye wol not be my treasourere
For I am shaue as nygh as any frere
But I pray vnto your curtesye
Be heuy agayne, or els mote I dye

Explicit.

Chaucer vnto the kynge.

O conquerour of Brutes Albyon
Which that by lyne and free election
Bene very kynge, thys to you I sende
And ye that mayne al harmes amende
Haue mynde vpon my supplycation.

Explicit.



Onsyder wel euery circūstaunce
Of what estate so euer thou be
Eyth stronge, or myghtye of puissaunce
Prudent or wyse discrete or bely
The dome of folke in soth thou maye not flye
What euer thou dost trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

For in thy porte or in thyne apparayle
If thou be cladde and honestly be seyne
Anone the people of malice wol not fayle
wythout aduyce or reason for to sayne
That thyn array is made & wrought in vaine
what suffre hem speke, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

Thou wolde to kynges be equiuolent
wyth great lordes eurn and peregal
And yf thou be torne and al to rent
Than wol they say, and tangle ouer al
That thou art a flogarde ỳ neuer thinne shal
Yet suffre hem speke, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If it befal that thou take a wyfe
They wol falsly say in theyr entent
That thou art lykely euer to lyue in stryfe
Voyde of al rest, wythout alegement
wyues hem mayster, thys is their argemẽt
Yet suffren theyr speche, and trust well thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be fayre and excellent of beaute
Yet wol they say that thou arte amerous
If thou be foule and vglye on to se
They woll affirme that thou art vicious
The peoples langage is so dispytous
Suffre al theyr speche, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If so be that thou of parfytenesse
Haue auowed to lyue in chastite
Than wol folke of thy person enprise
that thou art impotẽt tengẽdre in thy degre
And thus whether thou be chast or delaue
Suffre hem speke, and truste wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alwaye say amys

If thou be fatte or corpulent
Than woll they say thou art a gloton
A deuourer, or elis vyolent
If thou be megre or leane of fashyon
Cal the a nygarde in theyr opinyon
Yet suffre them speke, and truste wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be ryche, some wol yeue the laude
And saye it cometh of prudent gouernaunce
And some wol say it cometh of fraude
Or by sleyght, or by false chenysaunce
To say the worst, folke haue so gret plesaūce
what suffre hem say, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

If thou be sadde or sobre of countenaunce
Ben wol say thou thynkest some treason
And yf thou be glad of daliaunce
Ben wol deme it dissolution
Calling fayre speche adulation
Yet let hem speke, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

And who that is holy by perfection
Ben of malyce wol cal hym an ypocrite
And who that is mery of clene entencion
Thé say in ryot he him doth delyte (white
some mourne in black, some laude in clothes
what suffre hem say, and trust wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

who speketh much is holden prudent
And who debateth, mé saye that he is hardy
And who ỳ sayth lytle wyth great sentemẽt
Some men yet wol wyte hym of foly
Trouth is put downe, & nowe goth flattery
& who ỳ lyst playnly know ỳ trouth of thys
It is a wycked tong, ỳ alway sayth amys

For though a man were as patient
As was David thorowe humilite
Or with Salomon in wi dome as prudent
Or in knyghthode egal with Josue
Or manly prowd, as Judas Machabe
Yet for al that, trust ryght wel thys
A wycked tonge wol alway say amys

And though aman had the hygh prowesse
Of worthy Hector, Troyes champion
The loue of Troylus, or the kyndnesse
Or of Cesar the famous hygh renoun
wyth al Alysaunders domination
Yet for al that trust ryght wel thys
Some wycked tonge of hym wol say amys

Or though a man of hyghe or lowe degre
Of Tullius had the fugred eloquence
Or of Seneca the great moralite
Or of Caton the forsyght and prowdence
the cõquest of Charles Arrures magnificẽce
Yet for al that trust ryght well thys
Some wycked tonge wol say of hym amys

The

The wysely trouth of Penelope
Though they it had in her possession
Polynesse, beautie, the kyndenesse of Medee
The lyfe vnfeyned of Hertia Caton
Or of Alcest the trewe affection
Yet dare I say, and trust ryght well thys
I wycked tonge wol say of her amys

Than sythen it is so no man may eschewe
The swerde of tonge, but it kerue and byte
Ful hardely it is a man for to remewe
Out of thevr daunger hym for to aquyte
Wo to the tonges that hem so delyte (thys
To hynder or sclaunder, & set they: studye in
And they: pleasaunce to do and say amys

Moost noble princes, cherysshers of vertue
Remembreth you of hygh discrecyon
The fyrst vertue and most pleasyng to Jesu
(By the wrytyng and sentence of Caton)
Is a good tonge in hys opinyon
Chasty se the reuerse, & of wysdome do thys
Withdraw your herying fro al ỹ laune amys.

¶ Et sic est finis.

¶ Thus endeth the wykes of Geffray Chaucer, Prynted at London. The yere of our lorde. 1542.

¶ Epitaphiũ Galfridi Chaucer, per poetam lauriatum Stephanum Surigonam Mediolanensem in decretis licentiatum.

Perides muse si possint numina fletus
Fundere, diuinas atq; rigare genas.
Galfridi vatis Chaucer crudelia fata
Plangite: sit lacrymis abstinuisse nephas.
Nos colui viuẽs: at vos celebrate sepultu
Reddatur merito gratia digna viro.
Grãde decus vobis è docti musa Britanni,
Qua didicit melius lingua latina loqui.
Grãde, nouũq; dec' Chaucer, tamaq; pauit
Heu quanta fuerat pulca Britanna rudis
Reddidit insigne maternis ueribus, Etiam
Aurea splendescat terrea facta prius.
Huc latiale virũ mi, si tot opuscula vertes,
Direris, egregius que decorata modis.
Socratis ingenium, vel sotes philosophi
Quicquid et archani dogmata sacra ferũt
Et qualescũq; velis, tenuit ingentissime artis
Hic vates, paruo conditus hoc tumulo.
Ah laudis qtu preclara Britannia perdit
Dum rapuit tantum mors odiosa virũ
Crudeles parce crudelia tua furores
Non tamen extincta corpore fama perit
Viuet vetustum, viuent dum tempora, nomen
Viuant eterno tot monumenta die
Si qua bonos tagit pietas, fi carmina curant
Carmina qui cremut tot cumulate rogo
Nec sibi marmoreo ferebat verba superbo
Nec maneat laudis farina tumida
Galfridus Chaucer vates et fama poetarum
Materne hac sacra sum tumulat humo

¶ Post obitum Carton voluit te viuere Gulielmi Chaucer clare poeta tui
Nam tua no solu cõprexit opuscula lingua
Has quoq; fecit leo laudes vultq; hic esse tuus